

August 12, 2008
Vol. 182, No. 32**FOR THE RECORD****Baptists**Geoff Hammond, Johnny Hunt address state Baptist leaders. *Page 2.***Kentucky**Georgetown College cuts staff on decline in philanthropic giving. *Page 3.***Financial Forum**Numerous ministries depend on the generosity of Kentucky Baptists. *Page 4.***Guest editorial**Campbellsville University prepares tomorrow's Christian leaders. *Page 5.***Kentucky**Kentucky church gets a hand from building ministry. *Page 6.***2008 Beijing Olympics**
World's attention focused on China as Summer Olympics begin. *Page 7.*Believers taking Jesus Christ into the streets of Beijing. *Page 8.*Baptists have long history, vibrant presence in China. *Page 8.***Nation**Southern Baptists in Denver to aid first responders at Democratic National Convention. *Page 9.*

First fruits



Despite slumping economy, Kentucky Baptists continue to give

By Ken Walker
State Correspondent

Paducah—First Baptist Church of Paducah posted a \$26,000 budget surplus for the first four months of 2008, an optimistic sign reflected by other Kentucky Baptist churches and associations.

A wire story earlier this year about a LifeWay Research study showed that 76 percent of Southern Baptist churches were at or above this year's budget targets, a pattern that appears to be duplicated in Kentucky.

Since LifeWay did not offer a breakdown for the state, the Western Recorder recently contacted nine

churches and associations across the commonwealth. Only one reported its undesignated receipts were down over last year, and its overall income was in the black.

Pastors and directors of missions attributed Kentucky Baptists' giving to various factors, such as faithfulness to God's Word, generosity and responding to needs amid skyrocketing gasoline prices and food inflation.

"I think there is an element of faithfulness," said Todd Brady, pastor of First Baptist, Paducah. "When a need arises, people rush to meet it. I'm pleased our people are so eager to give."

The congregation's 2008 surplus follows a record-setting 2007 when the Paducah church saw a surplus of more than \$700,000. It donated most of that to missions causes, local ministries and Tennessee's Union University to help repair tornado damage sustained in February.

The current year's results are better than they appear, since First Baptist has kept expenses below projections, church administrator Dean Carpenter noted.

"Utilities, paper products and gasoline are a small portion of our budget," he explained. "However, we haven't really hit our driving season" □ See KBC churches ... *Page 3*

Falling revenue forces LifeWay Christian Resources to cut staff

By Steve DeVane
North Carolina Biblical Recorder

Nashville (ABP)—LifeWay Christian Resources will cut 5 percent of its workforce by Sept. 30 because revenues are lower than expected, officials of the Southern Baptist Convention's publishing arm have announced.

The cuts represent about 100 jobs. Officials would not say exactly how many workers will be displaced.

The agency's \$458.7 million revenue last year was higher than expenditures. LifeWay spokesman Rob Phillips said income this year is ahead of last year's pace, but below projections on which the budget is based.

LifeWay also is cutting expenses in other parts of its operations, according to President Thom Rainer. "These are hard but necessary steps to ensure the continued effectiveness of LifeWay ministries," he explained in a written statement.

The organization is funded total-

ly through the sale of its resources and does not receive direct financial support from the SBC.

According to SBC Life, a publication of the SBC Executive Committee, LifeWay provides income over its expenses to the SBC. Last year, LifeWay contributed \$790,000 to the SBC operating budget, according to a story written by Phillips. Those funds were part of nearly \$12 million in financial and "in-kind" contributions to the SBC and its entities.

Phillips said in an interview that there is "a whole lot of in-kind contributions" in that total. In-kind contributions are services or products provided free of charge. Therefore, Phillips noted, concluding that LifeWay would have sufficient income to retain the jobs without the contributions is like comparing "apples and oranges," he said.

"Those are two totally different ways that funds are being spoken of here," he added.

The shortfall in revenue could be

due to a number of factors: less business than expected at LifeWay's regional bookstores, fewer participants attending events at the agency's two national conference centers and fewer outside retailers stocking literature published under LifeWay's Broadman and Holman imprint.

"The economy is basically hitting consumers in their pocketbooks," Phillips explained. "Discretionary spending is down all over."

Phillips said the 100 jobs would be lost "mostly in Nashville," where the agency is headquartered, and "across the spectrum," including administrative, professional and support positions. Some employees losing their jobs are eligible for retirement, but he could not say how many.

Rainer indicated those whose positions have been eliminated will receive severance pay, some benefits and outplacement services. He said LifeWay is enduring the economic downturn better than other Chris-

Report: Religion was hot topic in primary elections

Washington (RNS)—Religion rivaled race and gender combined during media coverage of this year's primary campaign season, according to a recent study by the Pew Research Center.

Excluding "horse-race" coverage of campaign tactics and strategy, religion accounted for 10 percent of nonpolitical-process coverage, barely trailing race and gender at a combined 11 percent, the report stated.

The spring campaigns featured extraordinary coverage of Sen. Barack Obama's controversial former pastor, Jeremiah Wright, Sen. John McCain's struggle to win over evangelical voters and former Massachusetts Gov. Mitt Romney's Mormon faith.

The study, by the Pew Forum on Religion & Public Life and the Project for Excellence in Journalism, examined more than 13,000 news stories from nearly 50 mainstream news outlets.

Religion trailed foreign policy issues (14 percent) and domestic policy issues (26 percent) in non-horse race campaign topics, yet it outpaced race and gender in a year when the Democratic contest was led by a woman, Hillary Clinton, and Obama, an African-American.

"Indeed, religion could be at least as important in the 2008 presidential campaign as it was in 2000 and 2004," the study noted.

"If this denomination doesn't get desperate for God's Son and a movement of the Holy Ghost of God in our denomination again, we're in trouble. ... Attendance at the recent convention in Indianapolis dropped 20 percent. You can't do that very often and not be in serious trouble."

SBC President
Johnny Hunt

Hammond, Hunt address state SBC leaders

KBC recognized for mobilizing number of MSC missionaries

By Mickey Noah
SBC North American Mission Board

Atlanta (BP)—In one of the Southern Baptist North American Mission Board's largest summer leadership gatherings in its history, 515 Southern Baptist leaders converged in Atlanta late last month and heard NAMB President Geoff Hammond say, "This is not your father's North America anymore."

Representing Southern Baptists from all 50 states, Canada and Puerto Rico, the participants included specialists in evangelism, church planting, ministry and academics from state conventions, local associations, all six Southern Baptist Convention seminaries and NAMB.

"North America is increasingly a lost mission field," Hammond told the gathering. "North America has always been a mission field." Two thousand years ago, he noted, "It was a lost mission field that Jesus Himself came to."

Hammond challenged Southern Baptist leaders to pray for a spiritual awakening in the changing North American environment.

"Among the world's industrialized countries, Canada and the U.S. continue to have growing populations, legally and illegally," he pointed out. "Canada admits into their country 250,000 legal immigrants each year. The U.S. population is 303 million and will be 400 million in the next 35 years. Over 100 million will be Hispanic."

Johnny Hunt, who was elected SBC president in June, voiced a wake-up call in his first address to state convention, local association and NAMB staff.

"If this denomination doesn't get desperate for God's Son and a movement of the Holy Ghost of God in our denomination again, we're in trouble," Hunt declared. "The great evangelist Vance Havner said, 'The great tragedy of our day is that the situation is desperate but the saints are not.'"

"Attendance at the recent convention in Indianapolis dropped 20 percent. You can't do that very often and not be in serious trouble."

Hunt, senior pastor of the Atlanta-area First Baptist Church of Woodstock, Ga., said Baptists have to go back 50 years to find baptism numbers as low in North America. Evangelism, he insisted, is what Southern Baptists do as a result of what they have learned—to be obedient to the Great Commission.

"But revival comes when God touches. We need God to revive us personally, as churches and as a denomination and give us passion for lost people ... (to) let God come down and touch our hearts. ... God's going to have to wake us up, shake us and show us where we are."

To meet the challenges of spreading the gospel throughout North America, NAMB's senior strategists, under the leadership of Hammond, reviewed the Mission Board's new National Evangelism Initiative, introduced at the SBC annual meeting in Indianapolis.

"Not often do we have the opportunity to come together at an historical point with a rallying call to Southern Baptists like the NEI," Hammond told the leaders. "We didn't come up with NEI in a vacuum. About 96 partners from state conventions, associations and NAMB developed the strategy after many hours of meetings and travel. After your input here, it will go national."

NEI will be launched in early 2009 for a 12-year time frame. Its

theme will be "God's Plan for Sharing," or "GPS," with the goal of every believer sharing and every person in North America hearing the gospel by 2020. The four primary focus points of the initiative are praying, engaging, sowing and harvesting.

"The process of implementation lies in the hands of many of you in this room," Hammond indicated. "The church is the way Jesus has chosen to win the world. Our headquarters is the local church. Jesus died for the church."

Calling associations the "front lines," Hammond said association offices have most of the contacts with SBC churches. He reminded the Baptist leaders that in an effort to achieve more focus and emphasis on associations, NAMB has appointed David Meacham—a former associational missionary and state executive—to the newly created post of NAMB senior strategist for associations.

"Is NEI going to be a challenge? Absolutely. Is it anything less than what God expects of us? No," Hammond said.

In addition to the objectives set for the NEI, Hammond stated additional goals in the areas of church starting and missionary sending: That each SBC church in North America would be engaged in starting new churches to reach all people groups by 2020, and every Southern Baptist crossing cultural and spiritual barriers to serve in some sort of mission endeavor by 2020.

KBC honored

Also during the four-day conference, the Kentucky Baptist Convention was recognized by NAMB's sending missionaries group as the state convention mobilizing the greatest number of Mission Service Corps missionaries serving in evangelism and church planting during 2007.

Criswell College president resigns amid public feud

Dallas (ABP)—Criswell College President Jerry Johnson resigned Aug. 5, after a public clash with a powerful local pastor over the institution's future.

His resignation, accepted during a called session of the college trustees' executive committee, "was due to philosophical differences the president had with the chancellor and trustee leadership about the future of Criswell College," board members said in a statement. The resignation takes effect Aug. 15.

An interim president is expected to be named quickly, trustee chair Michael Deahl said Aug. 7. "Our plan and expectation is to have someone named and to be in place as close to that date (Aug. 15) as possible so there will be no gap in leadership," Deahl noted.

He also confirmed that controversy over the possibility of selling the college's assets "played a part" in Johnson's decision to step down.

Johnson and at least one Criswell trustee recently accused First Baptist Church of Dallas and its pastor, Robert Jeffress, of planning to sell the institution's assets. The proceeds, they contended, would go to fund a massive new proposed sanctuary for the historic church.

First Baptist, Dallas, under the guidance of its legendary then-pastor, W.A. Criswell, established Criswell College in 1971. The church must approve appointment of the college's trustees, over half of whom must be First Baptist members, and the church's pastor serves as the school's chancellor.

"For six months, the chancellor has been trying to cannibalize Criswell College to fund his building program at the church, which will cost \$170 to \$240 million," Johnson told the Dallas Morning News a week prior to his resignation.

The president also accused Jeffress of planning to stack the board with trustees who would agree to sell the Dallas-based campus and its radio station, KCBI. The FM station and its two satellite stations broadcast over large portions of Texas and Oklahoma.

Johnson claimed that, earlier this year, Jeffress said nearby Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary would absorb Criswell. Southwestern operates its own undergraduate college at its Fort Worth campus.

Criswell College's Steve Washburn, pastor of First Baptist Church of Pflugerville, Texas, also accused First Baptist, Dallas, of plotting to

sell the school's assets, in a letter released in late July.

According to news reports, Johnson and some trustees, such as Washburn, have pointed out that the college is meeting financial and enrollment challenges. But Jeffress has advocated for a study to determine whether a need for the institution still exists.

In spite of the disagreement, trustee chairman Michael Deahl praised Johnson's leadership in the college's Aug. 6 statement. He expressed gratitude for the "accomplishments that have been achieved at the college and KCBI under Dr. Johnson's leadership."

"I firmly believe that, due in no small part to Dr. Johnson's contributions, the greatest days at Criswell College are yet to come."

Johnson was named Criswell's president and a professor of theology and ethics in 2003. Prior to that date, he was dean and assistant professor of ethics at Boyce College, the undergraduate program at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville.

Johnson is a Criswell alumnus, earning a bachelor of arts degree in biblical studies from the institution in 1986.

Former CBF leader Sherman battling cancer, loses wife

Richmond, Va.—Cooperative Baptist Fellowship pioneer Cecil Sherman has been diagnosed with acute myeloid leukemia.

Sherman, 80, has sought treatment options at M.D. Anderson Cancer Center in Houston after receiving the diagnosis late last month, according to Tim Norman, a family friend and fellow Virginia pastor.

Acute myeloid leukemia progresses rapidly and is typically fatal within weeks or months if left untreated. It is a potentially curable disease, but only a minority of patients are cured with current therapies.

Sherman's daughter, Eugenia Brown of Madison, Wisc., accompanied him to the well-known cancer center in Houston, where he has been accepted into a clinical-trial program, according to sources close to the family. The 21-to-30-day trial, customized for older adults, requires Sherman to remain in a protected environment.

Meanwhile, Sherman's wife, Dot, died Aug. 1 in Richmond, Va., following a lengthy battle with Alzheimer's disease. She was 90.

"All of the CBF family grieves the passing of Dot Sherman," said Daniel Vestal, CBF executive coordinator. "Her quiet strength was endearing to everyone who knew her."

Because of his ongoing cancer treatments, Cecil Sherman was unable to be with his wife at the time of her death. The couple's daughter was able to return to Richmond to be with her mother.

As of last week, plans for two memorial services were yet to be finalized. One service will be held at River Road Baptist Church in Richmond, Va., and one at First Baptist Church of Asheville, N.C.

A native of Spartanburg, S.C., Dorothy Sherman was a graduate of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas. She worked as an editor at the seminary and the Southern Baptist Convention's Sunday School Board (now known as LifeWay Christian Resources).

Cecil Sherman, one of the most prominent figures in moderate Baptist life over the last half-century, served as the first national coordinator of the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship, giving shape to the moderate organization, founded in 1991.

He is renowned for going toe-to-toe with fundamentalist hero Adrian Rogers during theological debates when both served on the Southern Baptist Convention Peace Committee in the mid-1980s.

Sherman currently is pastor of Westover Baptist Church in Richmond.

Compiled from reporting by Associated Baptist Press and CBF communications

KBC churches say giving remains up in a down economy

Continued from page 1

yet, so we could (end up) over our budget for transportation."

Ashland Avenue Baptist Church in Lexington had a healthy surplus through the first four months of 2008, taking in more than \$5,000 over budget needs. That record came despite its ongoing pledge campaign to retire debt for its new, 600-seat sanctuary, which opened in March.

Accountant Steve Cummins said Ashland Avenue has collected \$900,000 of its \$1.3 million in pledges, with donations running about \$100,000 ahead of projections.

"Generous people," he said when asked for the reason behind the encouraging reports. "We haven't had to cut back on anything yet."

Giving this year is up by three percent at Second Baptist Church of Hopkinsville, which last year enjoyed a surplus of \$49,000.

Pastor Larry Purcell said the church also collected enough money to pay for installation of an elevator and remodeling the sanctuary and foyer in 2007.

"I was almost surprised," Purcell said of the increased giving. "I keep hearing about the fear factor, but what I see people cutting back on is travel vacations and some things they can do without instead of church."

Despite being without a senior pastor since last August, Highland Hills Baptist Church in Fort Thomas saw a surplus of nearly \$300 through the early part of the year, according to Associate Pastor Brent Reed.

The giving record is particularly encouraging because attendance declined significantly the past two years after three key staff members departed, Reed pointed out. Those in the close-knit community who remained have "taken ownership" and are determined to see the church survive, the associate pastor indicated.

"We have a very giving congregation, a congregation that understands tithing and thinks it's an act of worship," he said. "Giving our resources to God's work is a continua-

tion of worship. It's something you do like singing on Sunday morning.

"I haven't heard a lot of talk about the changing economy. People haven't said, 'I can't tithe because gas prices are up this week.'"

Horse Cave Baptist Church reported a mixed bag for the first four months of 2008. Although it ended that period about \$11,000 behind budget, offerings were \$1,360 higher than for the same time a year ago.

Pastor Kevin Denton said he has tried to teach tithing to newcomers, partially through other members sharing testimonies.

Denton's ministry assistant told him that numerous people had increased their giving gradually this year, which added up.

"Folks have continued to give," Denton noted. "I think people are responding to the need. I say if you're obedient to tithing and gas is \$10 a gallon, it shouldn't affect anything."

Even with increasing gasoline and food prices, the church has not had to make any adjustments so far this year, he added, although Denton said that could change if costs continue to rise.

However, at Enterprise Baptist Association in Prestonsburg, Director of Missions Tom Biddle had to double the association's travel budget halfway through its fiscal year.

Fortunately, Biddle pointed out that income has held steady, increasing between two and three percent.

"I don't know if I have an explanation," Biddle said of the increase. "I think people sense the need of what's going on. I've not had to change a whole lot because of the economy."

"It's a positive sign," he added. "The thing that helps us most of all is we give back to our churches. They see a positive return of what we're trying to do for them."

In Berea, Bates Creek Baptist Association is running a surplus.

Receipts for the five-month period starting last December were up by 32 percent over the previous year, despite a few churches decreasing

Associations, churches consider economic alternatives

By Ken Walker
State Correspondent

Berea—Even though Bates Creek Baptist Association's 2008 receipts are in good shape, Director of Missions Hamilton Valentine is keeping a wary eye on the gasoline pump.

As prices hovered around \$4 per gallon this summer, Valentine considered cutting some events for the coming year from the association's calendar.

"I feel people will start skipping some meetings if gas keeps going up," Valentine said. "I'm sure that's going to affect people's pocketbook (and) it may affect participation."

That means the DOM had to consider whether to continue scheduling lightly-attended events, such as a fishing tournament at Lake Cumberland back in May, where the director was the only man in sight. The men's prayer breakfast in March rarely draws more than 25, similar to a recent children's "Fun Fest" usually held on the first Saturday in August.

On the other hand, the association's wild game dinner in January attracted more than 200 and a salad dinner in the spring sponsored by Woman's Missionary Union drew 112 participants.

"I have to think of this when budgeting, especially with the price of gas," Valentine noted. "I'm in my 11th year and last year was the first time I overspent my travel budget."

Rodney Cude of Ohio River Baptist Association also kept a close eye on expenditures as he worked on plans for the 2008-2009 fiscal year budget.

"You kind of watch everything," the director of missions explained. "We just did our budget for next year and one thing we discussed was the need to keep it lean."

"If we looked at a ministry that had \$1,000 set aside for them the last four years and hadn't spent it, we asked, 'Why are we still set-

ting aside for it?'"

As the Salem-based association prepared for a mission trip in late June, Cude said he was hopeful churches would be generous with donations to help defray gasoline costs.

Although Ohio River Association received a \$1,000 grant from the Eliza Broadus Offering for State Missions for the trip, those funds could only be spent on materials to benefit residents in Eastern Kentucky.

At Second Baptist Church of Hopkinsville, Pastor Larry Purcell said the main tightening of expenditures has come in its seniors' ministry. Instead of trips to such locales as Branson, Mo., or the Gulf of Mexico, seniors chose to stay closer to home, the pastor noted.

"There's just a caution and a fear about making too many plans to travel that far," he added. "Two families told me they weren't taking long trips this year."

Although needing to keep expenditures in line because of its \$11,000 budget shortage, things were even worse last year at Horse Cave Baptist Church.

Pastor Kevin Denton said the congregation experienced a cash flow shortage after hiring a maintenance worker for the church and bills added up quicker than expected.

"We stopped maintenance spending and had trustees do it," Denton recalled. "Money had never been a problem. I don't know why giving dropped. It just seemed to dry up. We said, 'Something's got to change.'"

One method the church implemented was purchasing a high-deductible health insurance policy and setting aside funds in a health savings account to pay for minor medical bills.

Last year Denton said he was the only staff member covered under that plan. After saving \$3,000 over the cost of a conventional policy, Horse Cave Baptist extended it to two others this year and expects to save \$5,000.

contributions because of building campaigns, according to DOM Hamilton Valentine.

"I think God's people are committed to tithing," he said of the optimistic picture. "Givers are going to continue to find a way to give. Those who aren't givers are going to cut it out. If I can cut back on some other things, I'm not going to cut back on my tithe."

Although undesignated receipts were running three percent behind last year for Ohio River Baptist Association, its director of missions said interest income and designated offerings helped boost its income above projected budget needs.

"We haven't had any budget adjustments this year and I don't expect to make any," Rodney Cude said.

Georgetown College cuts staff positions on decline in philanthropic giving

By Drew Nichter
News Director

Georgetown—In response to a dip in philanthropic gifts for the 2007-2008 fiscal year, Georgetown College recently announced the termination of several staff positions at the school.

Nine full-time employees and one part-time employee have been let go according to Jim Allison, Georgetown's associate vice president for institutional advancement. Three full-time staff positions also were reduced to part-time status. In addition, the school will not seek to fill four full-time and two part-time positions that remain open, Allison noted. The cuts affected staff members in several departments, including academics, administration and athletics. Faculty positions were not affected.

Insisting that Georgetown College is "financially stable," Allison pointed out that the staff cuts will help the school in the long run.

"What we are doing here is making some adjustments that better position

us for the future," he said, "recognizing that some of the philanthropy has not come up to the levels that we had hoped it would in the past year. ... It's more about the future than it is about the past."

Allison speculated that the drop in donations to Georgetown was a result of the slumping economy and that several donors on which the school depended simply were unable to contribute.

"As we drew to the end of our fiscal year, some of the gifts that we expected to come through did not because some of our donors had been impacted by this downturn in the economy," he noted.

That shortage of gifts directly affected Georgetown's operating budget, prompting the staff cuts as a way to ease the school's stretched finances.

In addition, Allison said that Georgetown has adjusted its fundraising goal for the 2008-2009 fiscal year—which began July 1—from \$4 million to \$2.1 million. "The objective here is to put our donors into a position of being able to give to projects, give to programs, things that

they support other than just ... paying for the utilities," he explained.

Among the Baptist colleges in Kentucky, Georgetown appears to be the exception. Four other schools—Campbellsville University, Clear Creek Baptist Bible College, University of the Cumberlands and Mid-Continent University—all reported that philanthropic giving has remained steady or exceeded expectations in the past year.

"These are hard economic times. It is hard to raise money but it doesn't seem to have affected us," Clear Creek President Donnie Fox said. "We haven't seen a big increase (in giving), but we haven't seen a major decrease either. We're basically holding steady."

University of the Cumberlands' President James Taylor said the Williamsburg institution typically puts \$5 million of its approximately \$12 million in annual gifts toward its operating budget.

Taylor said the school has yet to feel harsh effects from the economic downturn but suggested that eventually it will

as more of donors' discretionary income goes toward everyday needs such as gasoline and food.

Benji Kelly, vice president for development at Campbellsville University, said the school experienced a decrease in giving among "lower-end donations" in amounts of \$25, \$50 and \$100. Still, that trend has not effected a significant change in total giving, he noted.

Robert Imhoff, president of Mid-Continent University, explained that the Mayfield school recently wrapped up its "best year ever," finishing \$2.8 million ahead of budget for the 2007-2008 fiscal year.

He added, however, that Mid-Continent relies more upon students' tuition than philanthropic gifts to survive. Imhoff also said he feels the success of the university is not tied to finances.

"I don't believe the economy has anything to do with equipping the saints," he noted. "The Lord's going to do what the Lord's going to do and ... anything that would come against the Lord's work better watch out."

WESTERN RECORDER

Box 43969
Louisville, KY 40253
(USPS 679-380)

DREW NICHTER
News Director

THOMAS C. TOWNSEND
Marketing & Business
Manager

*Earnestly contend for
the faith which was once
for all delivered to the
saints.—Jude 3*

Western Recorder is published weekly by Western Recorder Inc., an agency of the Kentucky Baptist Convention, Box 43969, Louisville, KY 40253, except for one week in July and December. For general information, call (502) 489-3535; toll-free (866) 489-3535. Periodicals postage paid at Louisville, Ky.

To subscribe: Send \$12.50 for a one-year, individual subscription. Group subscriptions on the church budget plan are \$10 per year. An additional church newsletter service is available for churches of all sizes. All subscriptions are payable in advance, except church accounts, which require a tax exemption number.

POSTMASTER: Send address corrections to: Western Recorder, Box 43969, Louisville, KY 40253.

To register change of address: Send the mailing label from page 1, along with your new address, to the subscription department at the Western Recorder address.

To give news tips: Call (502) 489-3422, toll-free (866) 489-3422 or write the editor or news director.

To submit a letter: Letters from subscribers on any subject will be considered for publication, provided they do not make a personal attack on anyone. Letters are limited to 300 words and may be edited for length. Submit by mail or by e-mail to: wesrec@earthlink.net

To place an advertisement: Rates are available upon request by calling (502) 489-3428. Institutional columns are paid space. Claims made by advertisers are not necessarily those of the Western Recorder's staff and directors.

Directors:
Chairman **Floyd Price**,
London;
Vice Chairman **Skip Alexander**,
Campbellsville;
Duane Bolin, Murray;
Dan Francis, Erlanger;
Chip Hutcheson, Princeton;
Lanna Kilgore, Bowling
Green;
Bill Marshall, Louisville;
Willis Polk, Lexington;
Linda Polley, Elizabethtown;
Jane Rice, Paintsville;
Wayne Spivey, Cynthiaana;
Rodney Travis, Hopkinsville.

The sting of death

By Gary Ledbetter

Grapevine, Texas (BP)—"I'm not scared of dyin,' and I don't really care. If it's peace you find in dyin,' well then let the time be near."—"When I Die," *Blood, Sweat, and Tears*, 1969

There's the rub. Is it peace you find in dying, or something more? Our sometimes bluff attitude towards death makes too little of its inevitability and finality. Death is cause for healthy fear and respect.

The sting of death is sin, we're told in 1 Corinthians 15:56. Sin is the first cause of death and the reason death is as ubiquitous as sin. As such we dread it rightly. Those outside of Christ dread it because their own faith leaves them uncertain as to their eternal state before the god they worship. Many know in their hearts they are unprepared to meet the God they have denied their whole lives. Death for them is accountability for a life lived in godlessness.

For Christians, the matter is still monumental. While we can have confidence in our eternal destiny, much of what will occur after death is unknown to us. Additionally, the process of dying often is fearsome. Even the pain and decline of aging shows the consequences of sin in gritty and stark ways.

We must say, though, that death and dying is generally a "good news, bad news" thing for mankind.

The good news is that our experience of physical mortality is of limited duration. Physical death is a gift from God when you consider that the alternative is eternal life in a fallen and declining condition. Corrupt man collects a lot of bumps and bruises over the course of a normal life. Imagine the collection of scuffs and wounds we would collect if we lived another 100 or 1,000 years. It's not a pretty thought.

I have attended more than a few funerals where the joy of the depart-

ed person's new life far exceeded the sense of loss. This friend had a degenerative nerve disease; this grandfather crippling respiratory problems; that grandmother the effects of multiple strokes—all made new after their souls were freed from malfunctioning bodies. Christians have a comfort in not only the hope of heaven but also in the best kind of healing for someone they love.

The bad news is that most people miss both the comfort and the hope. Health concerns aside, after a life lived on a man's own terms, things get so complicated as to be incomprehensible—and unpleasant.

Corruption and rebellion conspire together to make this life untenable. And yet we are foolish to believe eternal life is in no way connected to our mortal one. Lost men find themselves with one foot on a rotting, collapsing dock and the other on a burning boat.

"Whistling past the graveyard"

You have heard the expression "whistling past the graveyard" to describe someone who feigns unconcern regarding something he truly fears. The song I quoted at the top is an example of that. To those lost men I say, "Yes, fear death. Fear the Lord who judges the living and the dead. You will certainly fear Him when you face Him. It is better to face Him now."

To you Christians who read this, listen to a culture that speaks foolishly of ultimate things. Watch those who twitch and fidget at Grandma's funeral. There is no solution to their fear but the gospel we bear. Remember that we will all die either in terror or in bright anticipation of the God we all will meet.

Our churches do not give as much attention to the doctrine of man's eternal state as the Bible does. A look at heaven will salt our imaginations so we more earnestly seek the Kingdom of God and His righteousness. Learning about hell will

fill our hearts with gratitude for our great salvation. It also should make us pity those for whom the despair of this life is only a foretaste of their eternal state. How can we, believing what we say we believe, be uncaring about the fate of our neighbors?

I believe it is all real. Yes, heaven and hell are states wherein we are in the presence of or separated from God. That state of existence begins here in small ways that seem very big to our sensibilities. But they also are real places where resurrected bodies will dwell for eternity. These bodies will have substance, as Jesus' body did, and likely will have some ability to sensually perceive the experience of their surroundings.

As great as that sounds to those of us who are bound for glory, it is proportionally bad for those who are not. The Bible uses burning to describe the torture of hell. I believe this conveys the worst kind of pain the human body can experience. How much more serious could this warning be to us all? Do we believe in hell as literally as we believe in heaven? In the Bible, the reality of condemnation and reward are inseparable. Our convictions regarding one should not differ in degree from our convictions about the other.

Our Savior has taken the sting out of death for us. Our bodies will die but our souls and resurrected bodies will forever experience the completeness of life. Most of our neighbors, however, grieve without hope.

I believe this is something about which God cares very much. So must we.

Gary Ledbetter is editor of the *Southern Baptist Texan*

What are you thinking?

The Western Recorder considers letters on any subject for publication, provided they don't make a personal attack. Submit by mail, Box 43969, Louisville, KY 40253; or e-mail, wesrec@earthlink.net.

Super Saturday

With the Kentucky Baptist Convention's annual Super Saturday training events coming up, I decided to ask Darryl Wilson, the events' coordinator, and Alan Witham, our church development team leader, several questions to help you understand the value of this tremendous training opportunity.

The events are slated for Aug. 16 at Immanuel Baptist Church in Lexington; Aug. 23 at St. Matthews Baptist Church in Louisville; Sept. 6 at First Baptist Church of Somerset, and Lone Oak First Baptist Church of Paducah; and Sept. 13 at First Baptist Church of Pikeville and First Baptist Church of Bowling Green.

Here's what I found out:

What have been the most popular training topics and how have you built on that?

Since he's the KBC's Sunday school director, Wilson's response was not surprising—Sunday school. But he added that the KBC staff has used evaluations and other feedback from participants to determine spe-

cific topics, expand offerings and meet needs. Participation in sessions on assimilating new people into the church has grown the last two years.

Witham said a separate track for pastors also has attracted expanded participation. He noted that pastors have the awesome responsibility of "equipping the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ" (Ephesians 4:12).

What is new this year that will interest church leaders?

The Comeback Church track is new and will help church leaders identify and address issues in moving the church to grow. In the session for pastors, practical help will be provided through "Ten Proven Principles for Turnaround Growth." Participants will receive a free copy of the DVD, "Applying Comeback Church Principles in Your Church." The conference in the afternoon will feature the five key factors from the Comeback Churches research.

The Safe Church Initiative track also is new and will help church

leaders recognize and give attention to making sure all participants—especially our children—are safe in the church environment. A track on small groups and another focusing on single adults also will be available at the Super Saturday events in Louisville and Lexington.

There will be a Hispanic ministry conference offered at the Lexington Super Saturday. A teen track (grades 6-12) will be offered at four locations.

Who should come?

Super Saturday is a comprehensive training conference. Church leaders who can benefit include: pastors, church staff, ministers' wives, church secretaries, deacons, Woman's Missionary Union directors, Sunday school leaders and workers, discipleship/assimilation leaders, and worship leaders. Those who work with evangelism, stewardship/finance, church planting, Hispanic ministry, children, youth, church architecture, single adults and small groups also can benefit.

Register online at www.KyBaptist.org/SuperSaturday or call (502) 489-3572, or toll free in Kentucky at (866) 489-3572.

Bill Mackey is executive director of the Kentucky Baptist Convention

STEWARDSHIP

Numerous Baptist ministries depend on your generosity

By Laurie Valentine

Your church, association and the Kentucky Baptist Convention and its agencies and institutions have a wide variety of important ministries that need financial support. Some may need funding to

launch them into reality, while others could use the support to continue or expand an existing program or ministry. The methods by which you may support these important causes through legacy giving (giving out of your assets rather than your income) also are wide ranging.

An outright gift of cash, appreciated securities or real estate is probably the most common—and simplest—way to make gifts during your lifetime.

Other methods of lifetime giving, such as charitable gift annuities and charitable remainder trusts, allow you to set up a future benefit to one or more Baptist causes while retaining an annual income for your lifetime or a term of years.

There also is a variety of methods you can arrange now to benefit the causes of your choice at your death. The most common is a bequest in your will or living trust. Another possibility is to name a Baptist cause as the beneficiary of some portion of your retirement plan survivor benefit, IRA or a life insurance policy no longer needed for family security.

You can designate your gift to be used for a specific program or ministry of the benefiting organization, or you can allow the organization to choose how to use your gift. You also may want to limit the organization to using only the earnings from what you give (this type of arrangement is called an endowment fund).

Gifts can be made directly to the benefiting organization or may be given to a third party, such as the Kentucky Baptist Foundation, to manage for the designated beneficiary cause or causes.

Whether you wish to make gifts during your lifetime or at death, there is a variety of ways to do so by which you can make a lasting difference for the cause of Jesus Christ in our world.



FINANCIAL
FORUM

Laurie Valentine is trust counsel for the Kentucky Baptist Foundation

Students encouraged to be a light in darkness at school

Q: I'm a 15-year-old Christian girl who attends a public school. Sometimes I feel like I'm living in the spin-dry cycle of a washing machine with so much stuff whirling around me. Most of my peers' beliefs are so different from mine—not to mention some of my teachers. How do I survive?

Several years ago, I had the chance to climb Mount Rainier, a 14,400-foot mountain in Washington. We were above 10,000 feet when our team awoke at 1 a.m. to begin our summit bid. Roped together, we had sharp pointed spikes—called crampons—on our boots to get traction on the glacier, avalanche beacons under layers of clothes, and helmets in case of rock-fall. But the two most invaluable accessories we had in the dark early morning were a guide who knew where he was going and headlamps to provide light in the darkness.

Now, the Bible tells us that Jesus is both. He is our guide and He is the light of the world. In the case of daily living, the Guide is the headlamp. Jesus came to give you light and to give you life.

In Ephesians 4:17-18, we are reminded that many people walk in the darkness of this world and reject both a guide and a light. Because of their hardness of heart (i.e., pride) they try to live in a dangerous situation on their own, never realizing that all around them are slippery slopes, cliffs and crevasses large enough to swallow a skyscraper.

The Bible reminds us in 1 Corinthians 2:14, "The man without the Spirit does not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually discerned."

Stay in close contact with Christ by reading your Bible and praying daily. Worship regularly with other believers. Participate in Fellowship of Christian Athletes or another Christian group at your school—and rehearse daily what God says is truth.—*Scott Wigginton*

Q: What is Healthy Hoops Kentucky?

Healthy Hoops Kentucky uses basketball to meet the needs of kids ages 9-13 who have asthma. The free program provides children and parents with the tools they need to keep asthma under control, including how to use medications, the importance of proper nutrition and how to monitor exercise and recreation.

According to the American Lung Association, asthma is the most common chronic childhood disease, accounting for more than 14.6 million missed school days every year. Nine million children are diagnosed with asthma each year, and 4.2 million have suffered an asthma attack. Asthma impacts a child's ability to go to school, play sports and just have fun. It is the third leading cause of hospitalization among children under the age of 15.

Healthy Hoops provides a fun, festive environment in which children with asthma can participate with their families in basketball clinics with celebrity coaches and players, receive health screenings and attend workshops on asthma management. The program focuses on providing the skills and knowledge needed to live a healthy life despite asthma. Healthy Hoops also offers seminars designed to give coaches, physical education teachers and other professionals who work with children a better understanding of asthma and a greater awareness of its impact on children.

Visit www.healthyhoopsky.com for more information.—*David Garrard*

Family Forum writers are:

David Garrard, minister to children at St. Matthews Baptist Church in Louisville. E-mail: dgarrard@smbclouisville.org.

James Stillwell, minister to singles at Immanuel Baptist Church in Lexington. E-mail: james@ibc-lex.org.

Valerie Vincent, Christian counselor with Hardy Associates in Louisville. E-mail: dr.vincent@insightbb.com.

Scott Wigginton, associate professor of pastoral ministries and counseling at Campbellsville University and minister of counseling at Campbellsville Baptist Church. E-mail: sewigginton@campbellsville.edu.

Send questions for Family Forum to Western Recorder, Box 43969, Louisville, KY 40253 or e-mail wesrec@earthlink.net.

TEENS



CU prepares tomorrow's Christian leaders

Campbellsville University recently completed 101 years of providing quality Christian higher education in the Baptist tradition. During this past academic year, more than 400 students received master's, bachelor's, and associate's degrees in more than 50 academic areas. Our 2008 commencement in May was a historical day as we hosted Gen. James Conway, commandant of the United States Marine Corps.

Gen. Conway and the several thousand people who gathered in Finley Stadium on that beautiful spring day, witnessed a number of significant milestones. The first 22 graduates of the Campbellsville School of Nursing crossed the stage to receive their degrees. It was truly exciting and gratifying to know that the first class of CU nurses will soon be Christian servant leaders in the nursing profession.

As the graduates crossed the stage, I pondered the joy that is ours in educating the next generation of Christian servant leaders and the vast contributions that these graduates will make in the decades ahead. Each has a unique calling from God on his or her life, and have made innumerable contributions to the life of Campbellsville University.

Trent Creason, a 2008 graduate who received a Bachelor of Arts in pastoral ministries, is a prime example of the quality graduates produced by Campbellsville. Trent, who is a native of Campbellsville and Taylor County, and whose roots run deep on our campus with both of his parents serving as members of the CU faculty and staff, received a number of awards, including Mr. Campbellsville, class valedictorian and was student recipient of the Algernon Sydney Sullivan Award. The Sullivan Award is given annually to a student who exemplifies extraordinary servant leadership and engagement in the overall life of the campus.

Trent's plans are to attend a seminary in pursuit of a Master of Divinity degree and to prepare for a life of Christian ministry. Certainly, his high school and col-

lege careers exemplify a dedication to serving Jesus Christ, including mission trips, summer camps, children and youth ministry and Baptist Campus Ministries. His humility and servant heart were very much evident as he received his numerous awards.

Trent's spirit is exemplified in the following words he shared in a letter to me following commencement: "The last four years have been a great time of growth and development for me. God has worked in amazing ways and He has proven once again faithful in everything. ... The education that I received here will continue to influence my life and allow me to move forward prepared for the world to come. Thank you for providing such an institution that provides a great education, displays true integrity and points people toward Christ."

Trent commented further about the lasting impact that CU has had on his life: "My stay at Campbellsville University is one I will not forget and one that I will cherish. I know with full confidence that God called me to this university and that He has used my time here to teach me many things. ... I am thankful for the ministry that you allow on this campus and for the example that you and your leadership set forth."

Trent's words describe very well the mission of Campbellsville University. We are here to provide a quality, Christian higher education, steeped in the Baptist tradition, for the men and women who come here to "find their calling." It is our responsibility to help prepare them to become Christian servant leaders in the field of study and profession to which they are called by God. That was the mission that our institution's founders established in 1906, and it has never been more important than in 2008 and beyond. Christian servant leaders, like Trent Creason, are why we are here and they are the best hope for the world as we go forth in sharing the Good News of Jesus Christ.

Michael Carter is president of Campbellsville University

GUEST EDITORIAL



Michael Carter

China, the Olympics and the Bible

By Dick Staub

Seattle (RNS)—"Everything you can say about China is true ... somewhere in China."

Such was the insight offered by my 90-year-old friend Rosa, who along with her sister, the late Ruth Graham Bell (Billy Graham's wife), was raised in China.

It's a timely and useful observation as the Olympics are upon us and we Westerners are trying to understand the enigma that is China.

Semantics are always important when you're talking cross-culturally. Some athletes have donned protective face masks to limit exposure to Beijing smog, while one Chinese official insisted, "That's not pollution, it's only a mist."

Nowhere are words important, and the Chinese more enigmatic, than on the issue of religion and the Bible.

In the West, opinions are divided about the degree of religious freedom granted by China's communist government. It all depends on what you make of three separate but related issues: the official Chinese "Three-Self Church," the government-owned Amity Press that prints Bibles, and the claims of persecution by the "underground church."

First, a little history.

The Three-Self Patriotic Church born in the 1950s was an attempt to remove foreign influence from China's Christian movement. "Three self" refers to the three pillars of self-governance, self-support and self-

propagation. Western missionaries were forced to leave the country.

During the Cultural Revolution of the 1960s and '70s, all religious activity—including the possession of Bibles—was banned in China. The Three-Self Patriotic Church was terminated, despite promises by church leaders to remain "patriotic."

Christian activities were driven underground into house churches and, much like the early church under Roman persecution, this underground church movement thrived despite persecution. The more repressive the government became, the more the church grew.

In 1979, the Three-Self Church re-emerged under the control of the Chinese government, which monitors its activities. Certain topics were off limits, including the second coming of Christ, the resurrection of the dead, the gifts of the Holy Spirit and the establishment of the Kingdom of God. Teaching from books of prophecy that predict the end times—such as Daniel and Revelation—was prohibited. The church's influence over teenagers and younger children was severely limited. The government oversees clergy education and retains the right to review sermons to assure compliance with government restrictions.

While numbers are difficult to come by, David Aikman, the former Beijing bureau chief for Time magazine, estimates that there are now 15 million to 20 million members and affiliates of the Three-Self Church.

When the government reinstated the state-run church, it required that all Christians "register" with their local Three-Self Church. Millions of "house-church" Christians refused to go public. Today, it's estimated that 60 to 100 million Christians are active in this unregistered movement.

The burgeoning underground church is hungry for Bibles. Where can they get them?

Amity Printing Co. is the one state-approved printer of Bibles in China and has been printing as many as 3 million copies each year. These Bibles are available to anyone who "registers" to receive one. In advance of the Olympics, Amity opened a massive printing facility and increased production to 6 million Bibles a year, with a capacity of up to 12 million if needed.

So does China allow religious freedom and are Bibles readily available to any who desire one?

Westerners are being assured that Christianity is allowed in China and Bibles are available and that much is true—provided you are willing to attend the Three-Self Church and are willing to register with the government to receive a Bible.

Westerners also are told stories of persecution of the house church, and of the need for smuggling Bibles to desperate Christians. That's also true—provided that you refuse to grant the government authority over your spiritual life, an authority you believe belongs to God alone.

Dick Staub is author of "The Culturally Savvy Christian" and host of The Kindlings Muse

Longtime pastor Wallace dies at 88

Lexington—Longtime pastor and former director of missions John Wallace died Aug. 3 in Lexington. He was 88.

Wallace was pastor of Parkway Baptist Church in Lexington for 40 years before retiring in 1989. He also served as director of missions for Union Baptist Association from 1993-1999.

Wallace became pastor of Parkway Baptist in 1949 when the church was still known as Felix Memorial Baptist Church. In 1958, he led the congregation to relocate to its current site and change its name. He also served as pastor at churches in Texas and Oklahoma.

Wallace was a graduate of Baylor University in Waco, Texas, and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas.

Funeral services were held Aug. 8 at Calvary Baptist Church in Lexington, where Wallace was a member. He is survived by his wife, Mary, two children and five grandchildren.

Ky. church gets hand from building ministry

By Kay Adkins
Baptist Press

Shelbyville (BP)—When spring arrives each year, Chris and Dorrine Wurzel pack up their travel trailer and go on mission to construct a new building for a congregation God has led them to help—this year, it was Emmanuel Baptist Church in Shelbyville.

The Wurzels, of Brandon, Fla., are the founders and directors of Joshualand Ministries, a nonprofit organization through which God has provided 13 congregations with a new building during the past 12 years. Once completed, all of Joshualand's projects are either debt free or the congregation is left with a very manageable debt.

Joshualand's April-through-July construction schedule operates like clockwork. Volunteers from churches all over the United States arrive in their appointed week to complete a particular phase of the project. Each project encompasses about 250 volunteers in all.

On July 27, Emmanuel Baptist moved out of the VFW Post that had been its meeting place for four years, and into a new worship facility.

Commenting on Wurzel's coordination of the Emmanuel project, Pastor David Roach noted, "He runs a very tight ship, he has a plan and he uses everybody who comes."

A building contractor by trade, Wurzel became a follower of Jesus Christ at age 30 and said he has had a heart for missions ever since.

"Before I came to know the Lord, I had always had a feeling that I would be dead by age 30," Wurzel recalled. "I didn't realize that the death I would have would be dying to 'self' ... to become a Christian."

Now Wurzel said he cannot imagine doing anything less than what he has been doing for the past 12 years. He chose the name for his ministry because of his admiration for Joshua of the Old Testament who told Caleb, "If the LORD is pleased with us, he will lead us into that land ... and will give it to us" (Numbers 14:8).

"That just fits what we do—claim the land," Wurzel emphasized.

Joshualand in the bluegrass

Primarily committed to Southern Baptist work, Wurzel said he does not "choose" the projects he works on. "It's all done by prayer—trusting God. He directs it."

Joshualand Ministries operates thanks to churches and associations in 15 states who have partnered with the Wurzels, providing both labor and financing for the projects.

Roach affirmed the quality of the work Wurzel has supervised. "His ability has been demonstrated in getting plans and permits through the state. We ran into some snags, and Chris has really helped work through that."

Emmanuel is the fourth church in Kentucky that Joshualand Ministries has constructed. Wurzel asks congregations who have been helped to volunteer to help with the next Joshualand project.

Horton Flats Community Baptist Church in Olive Hill was the first Kentucky church to be constructed by Joshualand, and members from their congregation have since served



FINISHING TOUCH Volunteers with Joshualand Ministries raise the steeple for this summer's construction project at Emmanuel Baptist Church in Shelbyville. The ministry now has helped four Kentucky churches complete building projects, leaving behind little or no debt. (BP photos)

on other projects.

John Rucker of Horton Flats recalled the church's story: "There's only one other SBC church in our county—we were the second one. We had been meeting in a trailer that one of the local folks let us use for two or three years. It got to the point that we couldn't get enough people in there and we started checking around."

Rucker said Harold Cathey, director of missions for Greenup Baptist Association, had heard of work done in Wyoming and Montana by Joshualand. Cathey contacted Wurzel who expressed interest in helping.

The Horton Flats congregation began to look for financial assistance in the fall and received several grants through various Baptist groups, as well as donations from churches.

"The interesting thing," Rucker noted, "is that all the people who donate labor also come in and help out financially. We were running pretty close at the end, but the Lord provided. We're debt-free."

Wurzel gives God all the credit for providing in every project.

"We've been up against the wall so many times and not known where to turn," he said, recalling a time in Wyoming when a \$12,000 bill was due in a week and they did not know where the money would come from. God impressed on Wurzel to ask the volunteers present to write on a piece of paper how much they could provide toward the bill.

"I gave the papers to someone else to total up and it broke my heart. It was \$12,000," Wurzel recalled. "God just always provides."

Roach noted the deep level of faith he witnessed in the Wurzels, explaining that a number of serious trials in their lives have brought them to a total dependence on God.

One trial Wurzel shared was the sudden death of a son, Troy, who had a passion for missions work like his father. As a young adult, Troy had been an agnostic. "But the Lord got hold of him, and he changed his major and became a pastor," Wurzel said. The father and son did missions work together, and Wurzel had looked forward to many years ahead in their common passion.

But one Sunday afternoon, after Chris and Dorrine heard Troy preach at his church that morn-



Chris and Dorrine Wurzel

ing, Troy died unexpectedly. In the sermon Troy had prepared for that evening, his topic was Romans 8:28: "All things work together for good for those who love God and who are called according to his purpose."

Troy had planned to use the death of a family member as an illustration of one thing God can work for good in a believer's life.

Wurzels are "unique combination"

Roach said during the project, the Wurzels became part of Emmanuel's "family," living on site and worshipping with the church.

"Chris and Dorrine have a unique combination of ability and humility, and they are people who really walk closely with the Lord," Roach noted. "It never crossed my mind that we would be able to deal with a builder who had these qualities."

The Wurzels' oldest son, Todd, who is deaf and mentally handicapped, was a source of inspiration and encouragement to the Emmanuel congregation.

"He is quite a worker and has a sweet personality," Roach said. "Just smiling at him and giving him a thumbs up really lights him up."

The Wurzels currently are praying about a new phase of ministry and about selling their home next year to go on mission full time. Chris said he has been impressed with another need among new pastors who have been well grounded in theology to lead their congregations, but who lack practical experience in church planning.

Many of the pastors the Wurzels minister to are bivocational because their churches cannot pay them to work full time. "These young pastors need a lot of help, and we feel God is leading us to help," Wurzel noted.

Churches interested in learning more about Joshualand Ministries can contact Chris and Dorrine Wurzel by e-mail at christianwurzel@verizon.net.

Background check services offered to KBC churches

Louisville—In an effort to help its churches strengthen safety and security practices, the Kentucky Baptist Convention is offering discounted rates on background screenings for church ministers, staff and volunteers.

The discounted screenings are available through the KBC's partnership with Florida-based Protect My Ministry, an employment and volunteer background screening company.

According to Karl Babb, KBC's leadership development team leader, KBC churches are eligible for a 20-percent discount on service packages.

"The integrity of both the local church ministry and the individual's ministry is such a fragile thing in today's culture that churches must do everything they can to protect that integrity," Babb noted. "Background checks are an essential piece in the process."

In addition to discounted screening services, the KBC is working to expand its church security resources as part of its Safe Church Initiative.

Babb said the initiative was developed in response to a resolution to safeguard children passed by messengers to the 2007 KBC annual meeting.

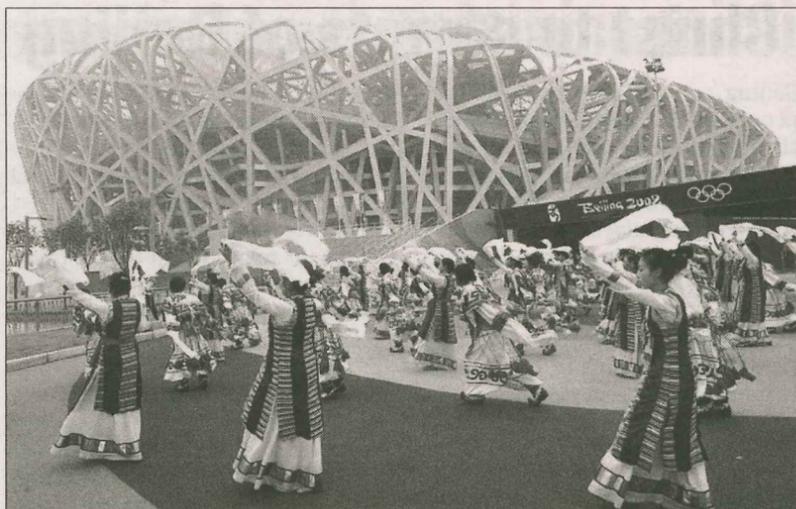
The resolution called for pastors and church leaders to lead in teaching and example in integrity, as well as to implement appropriate measures to enhance the safety and security of children, teenagers and other vulnerable individuals.

The resolution proposed a no-tolerance policy for any mistreatment of abuse and called for a thorough investigation and punishment for abusers through both biblical church discipline and through civil authorities. It also included a request for KBC Mission Board staff to provide materials, resources and training opportunities to aid churches in establishing and implementing safety and security practices.

"Realities of life necessitate wisdom on the part of church leadership, and part of that wisdom is to take every step we can to protect people, as well as the church and its ministry," Babb said.

"These precautions are not limited to church—we've already become accustomed to our school systems exercising increased security measures," he added. "Church size, location and history do not provide immunization from potential predators."

Resources for congregations seeking pastors and staff are available at www.KyBaptist.org/Leadership, or by calling the KBC's leadership development team office at (502) 489-3580, or toll free in Kentucky at (866) 489-3580.



PAGENTRY & PRIDE Tibetan performers rehearse in front of Beijing's National Stadium, also known as the "Bird's Nest," prior to the start of the 2008 Olympic Games in China. Many observers see the Olympics as a way for modern-era China to introduce itself to the world. (Photo by Teh Eng Koon/AFP)

World's attention focused on China as Olympics open

By Alice Elmore & Grace Thornton
The Alabama Baptist

Beijing (BP)—On 08/08/08 at eight minutes past 8 p.m., the Summer Olympics began in Beijing, China, fully in tune with Chinese tradition to the tiniest detail, even the kickoff time.

Eight is the number of prosperity and fortune in China.



And in a lot of ways, the Olympics have brought just that.

"It's a matter of national pride that they are able to host this world-wide event. To them, in many ways, it is a coming-out party," said Joyce Glover, a representative of the Southern Baptist International Mission Board's East Asia region. "It's showing the world they can do it, that they can meet global standards."

China's "coming out" is from a 20th century rocked with turbulence.

During that time, China staggered backward, beset by 40 years of war and political turmoil. After Communists seized power in 1949, the country groaned under another 40 years of calamitous government policies and crushing brutality.

On the heels of that unrest, some have dubbed the current era "China's century," a title the communist nation is aiming to solidify.

"This is not a simple sports event at all. Its meaning surpasses the importance of sports itself," Tu Mingde of the Chinese Olympic Committee told CNN.

Yasuo Fukuda, the prime minister of Japan, agreed. "The Olympics must succeed," he told CNN.

He compared Beijing's hosting of the Olympics to Tokyo's hosting of the 1964 games, which he said marked Japan's emergence on the world stage after its defeat in World War II.

Anticipating that additional scrutiny, China has put some elbow grease into its image.

After two decades of reform, the government has set the stage for the games, spending \$40 billion to remake its subways, roads and image, in addition to building new stadiums for the 500,000-plus foreign visitors Beijing is expected to host.

The games, however, also shine

a spotlight on issues that have troubled China for some time—namely, human rights and religious freedom.

Members of the U.S. Congress said in May that China had disgraced itself in advance of the Olympics. The comments were made at a press conference the day before the U.S. Com-

mission on International Religious Freedom included China on a list of the world's worst persecutors of religious adherents.

USCIRF Commissioner Nina Shea noted that the Chinese government still harasses and detains Christians, Muslims, Falun Gong practitioners and Tibetan Buddhists. In previous months, Olympic torch relays around the world were met with protests centering on China's treatment of Tibet.

These issues, in addition to drawing protests, set an interesting stage for Christians hoping to use the games as a ministry opportunity.

"There is nothing illegal about being a Christian in China. You're not breaking any law by being able to share the gospel with someone," Glover stressed. "But they do not want you to stand on a street corner and evangelize."

Conflicting reports have circulated regarding how many Bibles travelers will be allowed to bring into China.

"Bringing your own Bible shouldn't be a problem. Bringing two Bibles shouldn't be a problem. But bringing a whole box of Bibles would be a different story," said Lynn Yarbrough, an Alabama native who teaches in China.

Bibles are available in the country through bookstores that are part of government-registered churches, but standing on a street corner handing them out is not allowed, Yarbrough indicated. At this point, there remains an uncertainty among Christian organizations about exactly what is allowed.

In spite of the ambiguity, efforts to show God's love during the Olympics are going strong. The Web site WaytotheWorld.com has provided Christians a number of ways to volunteer.



Ready...or not...

HERE IT COMES!

Either way, GuideStone is ready for your retirement.



GuideStone.org/RetirementReadiness

Are you over 50? And are you sure you're financially ready for your retirement?

There is an easy way to find out, at your own pace and with special attention to the specific needs of those in the ministry.

Our **Preparing for Retirement Tool** is just another way GuideStone helps you manage your retirement assets — both now and after you retire.



GuideStone[®]
Financial Resources

Do well. Do right.[™]

© 2008 GuideStone Financial Resources 13701 07/08

CALL THE LEADER IN EMPLOYEE BENEFITS FOR
SOUTHERN BAPTISTS AT 1-888-98-GUIDE.

Baptists have long history, vibrant presence in China

By Manda Gibson
The Alabama Baptist

China (BP)—When most Southern Baptists think of Baptist history in China, they think of Lottie Moon, the beloved missionary for whom the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for International Missions is named. Lottie Moon arrived in China in 1873, but the history of Baptist missionary work there goes back even further.



AT RISK Some congregations in China face greater risk of persecution than sister churches in other areas, so they choose to meet in small groups at house churches. (BP photo by Kate Nelson)

When the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board (now International Mission Board) was founded in 1845, China was its first mission field.

The board's first missionary to China was Samuel Clifton. When Lottie Moon went to China

in 1873, she actually followed her sister, Edmonia, who had gone the previous year. Lottie served 39 years as a missionary, mostly in China's Shantung province. She wrote letters home, telling about the physical and spiritual needs of the Chinese people and challenging Southern Baptists to give so more missionaries could be sent out.

In 1935, a young doctor named Bill Wallace was appointed as a missionary to China. Wallace's excellent skills as a surgeon and his compassionate heart greatly furthered the cause of Christ in the area where he served. When Japan invaded the country, Wallace stayed. And when Communists took over the area where he served, he again decided to stay.

For that decision, Wallace paid with his life. In late 1950, his home was raided and he was arrested. Two months later, he was found dead in prison, apparently beaten to death.

Today, American Christians living in China are not being asked to give their lives, but they serve with the same zeal that guided earlier missionaries—and they are seeing God do amazing work as a result.

One American, Jared Blitzer, hiked 20 miles in one day to share the gospel with a certain people group. The next day he was exhausted, but felt God leading him and his American friends to hike to another area.

They came across a school, where they stopped to spend time with the children. Blitzer saw a man watching them and went to talk to him. He told the man that he and his friends were planning to hike up the mountain.

The man said, "No, you're not. You've come here to see me."

The Americans followed the man, named Yi, to his home, where Blitzer shared Bible stories, from creation to Christ, with him. When Blitzer finished, Yi said, "Today I'm 47 years old, and 20 years ago I realized that God existed ... and on that day I asked God to show me or to send somebody to me that would tell me who He was. And today, 20 years later, I know that God has answered that prayer."

Yi immediately put his faith in Christ. That same day he began sharing the gospel with his fellow villagers. Several weeks later, Blitzer went back to visit Yi and found that he had led his wife, two daughters and three other people in the village to faith in Jesus Christ.

Blitzer and Yi's story is amazing but not unique. God is doing amazing things through American Christians and local believers all across China. In fact, Baptist workers estimate that thousands of Chinese are becoming Christians every day.

But Joyce Glover, a representative of the IMB's East Asia region, cautioned Christians not to get overly excited about the numbers.

"Even though there is a tremendous responsiveness and thousands coming to know the Lord, you have to remember everything is big in China," she said. "It's still just a drop in the bucket."

While thousands are becoming Christians daily, even more Chinese are dying daily—most without Christ—while China's population continues to grow rapidly. Although the church is quickly growing in China, Christianity still is losing ground.

Southern Baptist missionaries "are committed to sharing Christ with the over 1.3 billion souls in China that are without the saving knowledge of Jesus Christ," Glover said. "We just need more like them to accomplish the task."

Believers take Christ to streets of Beijing

By Tim Ellsworth
Baptist Press

Beijing (BP)—After all the talk about pollution, Internet censoring and human rights abuses, the 2008 Olympic Games are here.

The opening ceremony on Aug. 8 kicked off the first Olympics in China, and hundreds of thousands of foreigners have poured into Beijing for the 17-day event.

Among them are a number of Southern Baptists participating in a variety of ministry and outreach opportunities.

"Because it is a global event, you have the opportunity to touch the whole world all at once," said Jean Cullen, ministry consultant at the Woman's Missionary Union. "In one minute you're speaking to one person from one country, and the next you're speaking to another person from another country. Your witness has a lot of bang for the buck."

Four teams of WMU volunteers are serving in Beijing during the Summer Olympics and will be involved in such activities as pin trading, festivals and cultural exchanges. They also are involved in prayer walking around the city.

Cullen said Olympic ministry is especially fitting for people who are outgoing and can easily engage others in conversation.

"Usually people who are there to attend the Olympics are very open to talking," she noted. "One of our hopes with this particular Olympics is that we'll have the opportunity to engage Chinese people."

Normally such a ministry is no cause for concern at Olympic events. But this year is different, as religious freedom in China is much more limited than in previous host countries.

"The volunteers have to be aware of what's acceptable in the country," Cullen acknowledged. "That's always an issue, but I would say there's more to it this year."

Other Baptist volunteers are in

Beijing as well, looking to engage people in conversation and talk to them about Jesus Christ.

But on the ground in China is not the only place where Olympic ministry is taking place. Some churches are finding ways to use the Olympics as a means of outreach in their own communities.

David Dykes, pastor of Green Acres Baptist Church in Tyler, Texas, is preaching a sermon series in August titled, "Go for the Gold: How to be a Champion for God."

Biblical champions

"I'm going to actually highlight some of the unsung champions from the Bible," Dykes explained.

He said he will use such biblical characters as Benaiah, Ehud and Michaiiah, and will incorporate stories from the Olympics to give practical applications for how a Christian "can be a champion for God."

Green Acres also held a 100-mile "Carry the Light" torch run throughout Tyler leading up to the Olympics. Hundreds of church members volunteered to carry a torch through different neighborhoods in the city, accompanied by others who prayed as they ran and walked through the city.

"I just think people are interested enough in the Olympics themselves," Dykes noted. "I'm always looking for opportunities to involve people who wouldn't ordinarily come to church."

The pastor said his church is especially interested in the Olympics this year as they have had a partner city in China for the past five years.

Other churches recently have returned from mission trips to China ahead of the Olympics.

One Baptist church in southeast Texas (unnamed for security reasons) took a team of 15 people in June.

"We saw that it was kind of a once-in-a-lifetime ministry because

of the Olympics coming up," the church's missions minister said.

The team members' ministry focused on meeting people in various parks around Beijing.

"Once we met them and established a relationship with them, then we would slowly start to share when the opportunity became available," he recalled.

Another pastor, at a Baptist church in north Texas, also led a team to China in June. The volunteers worked with house church members, the pastor indicated. House churches in China are unregistered congregations that have refused to come under the oversight of the government-controlled Three-Self Patriotic Movement. Many house church leaders in China have faced intense persecution at the hands of the Chinese government.

The pastor expressed optimism about the openness for Christians to talk to others about their beliefs during the Olympics.

"If I was going to be there during the Olympics, I would feel a little more of a freedom of sharing my faith," he said. "The police are not going to be so much focusing on the Christians as they are other groups that may use the Olympics to undermine the government."

He encouraged other churches to consider short-term mission trips to China, adding that the Chinese people are increasingly open to the gospel. "There is a real evidence of the growth of the Christian faith in China," he said. "Going over to China on short-term trips can really make an impact—the relationships that you develop and the opportunities you have to share the gospel with the people who really are hungry. They're hungry for truth and they really are hungry for God."

"I'll be involved in China, probably until I go to heaven," he emphasized. "And I want to take as many of those people with me as I can."

A Time for Prayer September 10, 2008

With **One Voice**

Praying with urgency for Kentucky



Pastors, make plans now to hold a With One Voice prayer gathering in your church. Resources for promoting and conducting your prayer meeting are available online at:

www.kybaptist.org/onevoice.

We will...

- Pray for people we know who do not yet know Jesus
- Pray for spiritual awakening in our community
- Pray for a movement of God in our church
- Pray for Kentucky Baptist ministries across the commonwealth



For more information, call:
502-489-3528 or 866-489-3528

Visit our web site at:
www.kybaptist.org/onevoice



.....urgent need to connect all people to Jesus Christ.....

Baptists to aid first responders at Democratic convention

By Mickey Noah
SBC North American Mission Board

Denver (BP)—When the Democratic National Convention meets at Denver's Pepsi Center Aug. 25-28, the Mile High City will absorb an estimated 225,000 visitors—including the 5,000 credentialed delegates, politicians, media representatives and protesters. Local officials are preparing for the challenge.

As a ministry to Denver's law enforcement officers and first responders such as emergency medical service personnel and firefighters, three local Southern Baptist congregations and Mile High Baptist Association have initiated the "Love Denver" outreach.

Five hundred or more Baptist volunteers will join in the effort, and the Southern Baptist North American Mission Board is coming alongside the outreach with funding.

Denver's Riverside Baptist Church, Bear Valley Church, First Southern Baptist Westminster Church and the association have been planning the Love Denver ministry for 10 months.

The outreach will provide law enforcement personnel and first responders with hot meals, sandwiches, snacks, bottled water and other refreshments during the four-day convention, as well as during the days leading up to and after the Democratic gathering.

Jim Shaddix, pastor of Riverside Baptist in downtown Denver, noted,

"We hope the outcome will be a lot of public servants in the city of Denver seeing Baptists' desire to be servants and reflecting the Lord Jesus Christ. Our desire is to minister to the law enforcement personnel and first responders, saying to them, 'We care about you, love you and want to be here for you.'"

With the Democratic convention coming to town, Shaddix said the church felt that an outreach was more than an option: "We felt it was one of those assignments from the Lord."

"Riverside, Bear Valley and the association wanted to come up with a ministry to support law enforcement in Denver long after the dust of the Democratic convention has cleared," added Bob Ryan, team leader with Mile High Association.

He said Southern Baptists, in partnership with the city of Denver and the federal government, will prepare and serve 7,600 meals a day from Aug. 23-29. Logistics include, for example, an order for 135,000 bottles of water that will be distributed.

Hot meals will be served each day between 11 a.m.-2 p.m. and 11 p.m.-2 a.m. in 19 different "zones" throughout the downtown area. Most of the zones will be based in downtown hotel conference rooms, where officers can eat or take a snack break during their shifts or when their shifts are over. The facilities will remain open

around the clock for personnel who will not be able to leave the downtown area while on duty.

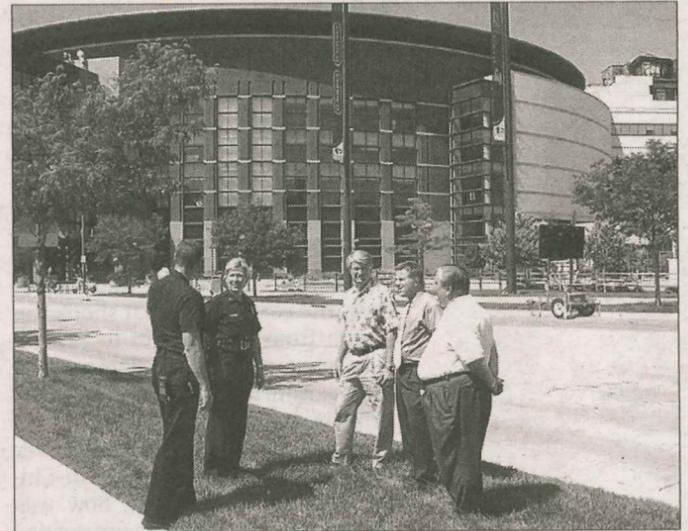
In addition to food and refreshments for the city's police officers and first responders, Southern Baptist chaplains will be available in each zone. Ryan pointed out that the venture will require 76 chaplains a day, each working six-hour shifts at each of the 19 sites.

"In all, we'll have 500-700 volunteers working at the 19 locations during the convention," he noted. "I'd feel more comfortable with 1,000. We'll just have to be more intense with less."

Ryan said hot food preparation will be handled by volunteers using the commercial-style kitchen at Riverside Baptist Church, located near INVESCO Field at Mile High as well as an Oklahoma Baptist disaster relief feeding unit stationed at the Mile High Baptist Association office. Each kitchen facility will prepare 1,600 meals every 12 hours.

On Thursday night of the convention, presumptive Democratic presidential nominee Barack Obama is scheduled to give his acceptance speech outdoors in front of a crowd of 77,000 at INVESCO Field, which will greatly stretch law enforcement personnel handling security and traffic in downtown Denver.

Ryan indicated that the Love Denver ministry project still needs volunteers. Those interested in volun-



teering—particularly those qualified for chaplaincy ministry and drivers with commercial licenses—can visit the Web site www.SaturateColorado.com to sign up.

"If a pastor wants to feel appreciated, this is the way to do it, to volunteer to serve" during the influx of convention-goers in Denver, Ryan suggested.

"Southern Baptists everywhere need to know that they're playing a part in this effort," he added. "The North American Mission Board contributed \$60,000 toward the project's overall budget of \$284,000. Every Baptist is participating because of their gifts to the Cooperative Program."

SHARE THE LOVE At the Pepsi Center, site of the upcoming Democratic National Convention, two Denver police officers visit with three pastors at the forefront of the "Love Denver" project to help first responders. The pastors are (from left) Jim Walters of Bear Valley Church; Jim Shaddix of Riverside Baptist Church; and Dan Dellinger of First Southern Baptist Westminster Church. (NAMB photo)

REGISTER
NOW!
Only \$50.00
per couple
Lunch is
included

"What a perfect day! My husband and I are more connected than we've ever been. Thank you!"
Denise Swan, Flint, MI

"I never would have guessed that I'd enjoy a marriage seminar so much. My wife asked me to come and it was the best investment of a day I can imagine.... not touchy-feely, or silly, just practical and real!"
Bill Olson, Seattle, WA

B E C O M I N G (soul mates)

September 13, 2008

First Baptist Church, Sevierville

9:00 am - 3:00 pm with a break for lunch

Dr. Les Parrott teaches with biblical insight and practical advice. Everyone (newlyweds, long married couples, seriously dating or engaged) who want to learn the keys to making a bad relationship good or a good relationship great, will benefit from this one-day seminar. His reality-in-marriage message is simple, sensible, and can be applied to couples of all ages.

LEARN the 3 essential ingredients of maintaining lasting love.
DISCOVER the 4 unique love styles and which fits you best!
FIND down-to-earth ways to bring your spirits together and enjoy

You can develop a deeper and more meaningful connection - let this day be your starting point.

Visit us at www.fbcsev.org or
call (865) 429-6310 for more information.

Deadline to register: September 5th
Couples of all ages are welcome!

DRS. LES & LESLIE PARROTT Married for over 20 years, Drs. Les and Leslie Parrott are best-selling authors who have been featured across the media including Oprah and Good Morning America. They are also the co-directors of the Center for Relationship Development at Seattle Pacific University.

First Baptist Church
Sevierville

317 Parkway, Sevierville, TN
(865) 453-9001
www.fbcsev.org



California earthquake serves as preparedness reminder

By Erin Roach
Baptist Press

Chino Hills, Calif. (BP)—Southern Baptists and others involved in disaster relief responded to a 5.4-magnitude earthquake last month in California with a renewed commitment to being prepared for “the big one.”

Don Hargis, disaster relief coordinator for the California Southern Baptist Convention, told Baptist Press the earthquake that shook the region from Los Angeles to San Diego, yet caused limited damage and minor injuries, “was not serious” compared to what is possible.

“I called my daughter who lives right there at the epicenter in Chino Hills and said, ‘Well, how was it?’ and she said, ‘It was a great ride.’ That’s California. If you’re not over 6 (on the Richter scale), you don’t even think about it,” he insisted.

Earthquake preparedness, Hargis noted, is similar to any other kind of disaster relief planning as officials stay in close contact with the Federal Emergency Management Agency and, in California, with the state Office of Emergency Services.

Southern Baptist officials also communicate closely with the American Red Cross and the Salvation Army to coordinate preparations and responses. The magnitude of a disaster determines which groups will respond, Hargis said, and sometimes everyone is called into action.

The Southern Baptist North

American Mission Board provides guidelines to aid in family preparedness and church preparedness for disasters, Hargis noted.

“In 1994, we had the Northridge earthquake and that was a 6.8,” he recalled, referring to the deadly incident that toppled bridges and buildings. “That did significant damage, and we as Southern Baptists responded with 1.2 million meals and cleaned and rebuilt 25 churches.

“That was very early in our training of disaster relief preparedness,” he added. “We haven’t responded to any earthquakes here in the United States of that magnitude since then.”

Hargis said he had not received any reports of damage to churches from this most recent quake.

“If they’ve got old pipes like they had under the streets that cracked or something that’s old that couldn’t stand 40 seconds of shaking, then it’s going to give way. And that’s what we had. It was basically 40 seconds of shaking,” he said.

Dozens of aftershocks followed, but the largest was a 3.8 magnitude, the Associated Press reported. Though the Northridge quake was the last one that caused significant damage, the last big trembler in Southern California was a 7.1 quake that struck the desert in 1999. Earlier this year, scientists predicted that California has a 99-percent chance of a 6.7-magnitude earthquake or larg-

er in the next 30 years.

More pressing than earthquakes at this time, Hargis noted, are California wildfires.

“This is one of those years that is just really bad, and what’s bad is it started early,” he said. “What’s different is it started in Northern California instead of Southern California.”

Many of the fires began as the result of lightning strikes, which were blamed for more than 1,000 fires burning simultaneously, Hargis pointed out.

“That just makes significant problems. A lot of it was in the back country, so we weren’t too worried about it, and the firemen just let that burn but they kept it under control the best they could,” he said.

California Baptist disaster relief workers cleaned homes after fires affected residential properties, such as in the Santa Cruz area near Aptos and more recently in the Paradise region of Northern California. One community there lost 100 homes, Hargis indicated.

The state convention also sent a feeding unit to Chico while the nearby Paradise fire was burning because officials had requested help in serving meals to people at evacuation shelters. Hargis said the convention’s response is ongoing when it comes to wildfires—and they are always ready.

“We are also going to Big Sur,

where they lost 26 homes, and we’ll be cleaning there in about two weeks,” Hargis told BP.

The disaster relief coordinator expressed disappointment that one of the latest hot spots was an out-of-control fire burning just 12 miles outside Yosemite National Park, which is near his home. The fire destroyed more than 25 homes and was recently contained, according to Associated Press reports.

“That’s just such a beautiful personal area to me that I just hate to see it burn. After a burn, it’s just very ugly. It scars the land for a long time,” he said.

Hargis requested that Southern Baptists remember the monetary needs when they hear of disaster relief operations.

“Disaster relief only can operate according to the donations that are taken,” he noted. “Whether it’s California or Texas or North Carolina, all of us operate and make our ministry possible because of donations from churches that give to either their state mission offering or directly to disaster relief.

“When Baptists hear of a disaster like this, don’t assume that the money is there to respond because a lot of times the money is not,” Hargis added. “We ask everybody to think about those people and then say, ‘I’m very blessed that it’s not my house, so I’m going to give a little bit to help with the cause.’”

NATIONAL NOTES

Groups protest highway crosses. A church-state watchdog group has joined Hindu and Jewish organizations in arguing that a Utah court erred in ruling that a highway cross memorializing a fallen state trooper is a “secular symbol of death.” A friend-of-the-court brief was filed Aug. 6 in the 10th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals by Americans United for Separation of Church and State and several other groups, including the Anti-Defamation League, the Union for Reform Judaism and the Hindu American Foundation. Last November, a U.S. district judge ruled that the Utah Highway Patrol Association could continue to erect 12-foot crosses, as it has for 14 troopers.

Poultry plant swaps holidays. A Tyson Foods plant in Shelbyville, Tenn., will recognize a Muslim holy day as one of its eight paid holidays in place of Labor Day, a decision that has left many angry. The Retail, Wholesale and Department Store Union negotiated the contract to assist the poultry processing plant’s Somali workers, many of whom are Muslim. The contract makes Id al-Fitr—which marks the end of Ramadan and falls at a different time each year, typically in late fall—a day on which all union members can either stay home or work for extra pay. Criticism of the move was overwhelming, prompting the union to remove from its Web site its initial press release that simply announced the change and instead post a more detailed statement defending it.

State science official sues over e-mail. A Texas state science curriculum director, who was fired last fall for appearing to criticize intelligent design has filed suit against her former employer. Christina Comer served as the state science director for nearly a decade before she was fired, and is now suing the Texas Education Agency and Education Commissioner Robert Scott, contending that she was terminated illegally for forwarding an e-mail about a lecture critical of the ID movement, The Dallas Morning News

reported. A Texas Education Agency policy requires employees to be neutral on the subject of creationism, and officials determined the e-mail implied an endorsement of the speaker’s position, the newspaper said. The speaker had written a book asserting that creationist politics were driving the national movement to have intelligent design taught in schools.

Scholar tapped for N.Y. church pulpit. A New Testament scholar at Vanderbilt University Divinity School has been nominated to become senior minister of New York’s Riverside Church, one of the nation’s most prestigious and visible pulpits. Brad Braxton, 39, has been selected by a church search committee to succeed James Forbes, who retired last year. Braxton’s selection was announced Aug. 3 at the multi-racial, interdenominational church near Columbia University on Manhattan’s Upper West Side. The congregation will vote on the nomination Sept. 14. Braxton would be only the second African-American to hold the position. Braxton previously taught at Wake Forest University Divinity School in Winston-Salem, N.C.

Study: Adult video games sold to kids. Video game retailers sold Mature-rated video games to minors 36 percent of the time, according to a study by the Parents Television Council to determine whether age restriction policies were being enforced. The study, which has been conducted since May, followed a study released that month by the Federal Trade Commission which found retailers sold M-rated video games to minors 20 percent of the time. Children who participated in the study were instructed to enter the store, find an M-rated game and attempt to purchase it with cash, PTC reported. They were instructed to not lie or misrepresent themselves during the process. Most children who were able to purchase a game said that when the item was scanned for sale at the register a note came up requesting ID, but the cashier ignored it.

The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary presents
the Seminary Orchestra, led by conductor Douglas Smith

2008
Tuesday,
August 26

SUMMER FEST POPS CONCERT

Music from
The Magnificent Seven
and a medley of themes from
James Bond, Agent 007

11-year-old
violinist, Joy Kim,
accompanied by her
pianist father, Ray Kim

Richard Rodgers'
THE SOUND OF MUSIC,
featuring Chandi Plummer

Radetzky march,
“Clapping Song”,
and Sleigh Ride



The downbeat is 7:30.
Dress is casual. The whole family is invited.
2825 Lexington Road. Louisville, Kentucky. Alumni Chapel. Free.

Connecting with campers

Crossings staff understands importance of relationships

Recently, I had the rare privilege of being at camp for a week. I know you may think, "Isn't that what you do all summer long?"

Actually, my participation at camp has become quite limited as our ministry has grown and my responsibilities have changed. The visit has reminded me of why I honestly do love camp.

While I'm there, I must admit my deep felt passion and humility for what camp does is certainly rekindled. I do think our ministry is somewhat of a paradox as we experience incredible blessings and face equally demanding challenges.

I have come to realize that as our ministry grows, the challenges are growing in equal proportion to our victories. The real challenge for our staff is to function in a support role and still understand the impact of our efforts as students and adults return home.

I am so humbled that God allows me to serve in a ministry that from many perspectives is needed now more than ever. With the relentless pressure that the world places upon our youth, they need

a place where they can come and be removed from these powerful forces. This temporary environment proves to be life changing for countless students each and every summer.

As groups arrive at camp, it does not take long for our staffers to be emotionally moved from learning of the pain that so many students feel from the difficulties in their lives. Our simple purpose is to see life change take place in the hearts of our guests through a relational-based camp model. It is our belief that the need for students to have an authentic relational investment is at the very heart of camp ministry.

Even now, our staff is excited as we are planning for 2009—the 10th anniversary of Crossings Camps. Looking back over time, it still seems hard to believe all this has taken place in 10 short years.

To all who have been prayer warriors for our ministry, a huge thank you. I am sure that the thousands who have accepted Christ over the past 10 years are thankful as well.

David Melber is president of Kentucky Baptist Assemblies. Contact him at Box 99918, Louisville, KY 42069-0918; phone (502) 491-7000.

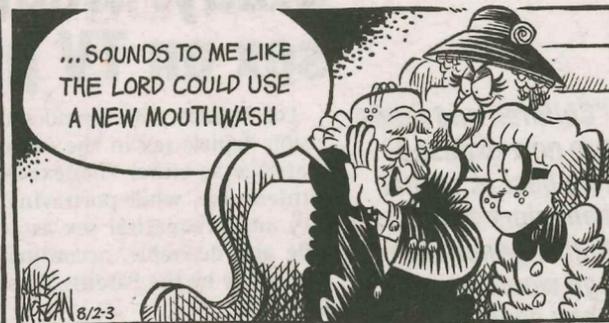
KENTUCKY BAPTIST ASSEMBLIES



David Melber

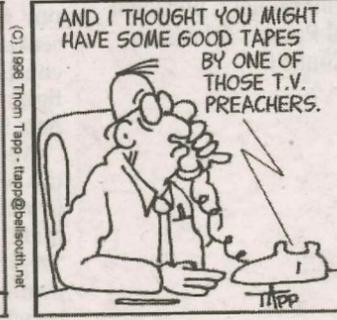
For Heaven's Sake

Mike Morgan



Church of the Covered Dish

Thom Tapp



Bible Crosswords

By John Thornberg

Across

- 1 Bashful
- 4 "Lest thou ____ thy foot against a stone" (Psalm 91:12)
- 8 "A glorious church, not having ____, or wrinkle" (Ephesians 5:27)
- 12 Sheltered from wind
- 13 Gnawing pain
- 14 Father of Ham, Shem, and Japheth
- 15 State that is bordered by Illinois (abbr.)
- 16 "Jesus saith unto them, Come and ____" (John 21:12)
- 17 Cattle or farm
- 18 Worship
- 20 Body parts between the waist and the knees
- 21 Ironic
- 22 Engage beforehand
- 25 Hard fat found in cattle and sheep
- 27 "The wisdom that is from above is ... full of ____ and good fruits" (James 3:17)
- 28 Affirmative in Acapulco
- 29 "Your ____ men shall dream dreams" (Joel 2:28)
- 30 God worshiped by Jezebel, and its namesakes
- 31 Cotton ____
- 32 Article
- 33 Second planet from the sun
- 34 Small, headless nail
- 35 Qualities of a bishop: "____, not a brawler" (1 Timothy 3:3)
- 37 Command to a horse
- 38 Killer whale
- 39 One foundation of Christian life
- 42 "O ye of little ____" (Matthew 8:26)

1	2	3		4	5	6	7		8	9	10	11
12				13					14			
15			16					17				
18		19					20					
		21				22					23	24
25	26				27						28	
29				30						31		
32			33						34			
35		36						37				
		38					39				40	41
42	43					44					45	
46					47					48		
49					50						51	

- 44 City in Normandy
- 45 Command word
- 46 Big blunder
- 47 "That ye ____ one another" (John 13:34)
- 48 United
- 49 Preposition
- 50 "Hear my voice, and ____ the door" (Revelation 3:20)
- 51 "That they may be ____, even as we are" (John 17:22)

Down

- 1 Make a mistake
- 2 "He that hath ears to ____" (Matthew 11:15)
- 3 Biblical pronoun
- 4 Jay's love in The Great Gatsby
- 5 Teen trauma
- 6 Pronoun
- 7 "Greater is ____ that is in you" (1 John 4:4)
- 8 Brisk and lively
- 9 Composure
- 10 Canoe component
- 11 "Hallowed be ____ name" (Matthew 6:9)
- 16 "Whose waters cast up mire and ____" (Isaiah 57:20)
- 17 Floppy ones?
- 19 Astonished

- 20 Feathered fishing lures
- 22 Real winner (colloq.)
- 23 Encompassing the Orient
- 24 "Charity suffereth long, and is ____" (1 Corinthians 13:4)
- 25 "For though thou wash thee with nitre, and take thee much ____" (var., Jeremiah 2:22)
- 26 Bone of the forearm
- 27 Bread from heaven
- 30 Hardwood tree
- 31 "The beauty of old men is the ____ head" (Proverbs 20:29)
- 33 "Add to your faith ____" (2 Peter 1:5)
- 34 Noggin
- 36 What the bread winner must do
- 37 "But her leaf shall be ____" (Jeremiah 17:8)
- 39 ____ the way
- 40 First home
- 41 "And he ____ upon a cherub, and did fly" (Psalm 18:10)
- 42 Airport abbr.
- 43 Vowel trio
- 44 To go back on a promise, with "out"
- 47 Biblical exclamation
- 48 Officer of the U.S. Army (abbr.)

Last week's solution

E	T	C	H	T	I	S	O	B	O	E		
N	R	A	P	A	S	T	E	A	L	L		
D	I	S	T	A	L	U	G	A	N	D	A	
C	H	A	L	C	E	D	O	N	Y	M		
K	E	N	N									
A	S	S	A	G	A	T	E	N	A	G		
T	D	I	A	M	O	N	D	N	O			
M	E	N	D	R	E	G	S	B	A	G		
R	I	O										
N	C	H	R	Y	S	O	L	Y	T	E		
A	T	E	M	P	O	P	U	E	B	L	O	
N	I	L	H	Y	R	A	X	O	A	R		
O	N	Y	X	O	I	L	L	Y	S	E		

Updated & Improved

FAITH Training Seminar

September 15-16, 2008

Hosted by Severns Valley Association of Baptists

Monday, September 15:

Registration 9:00 - 10:00 AM
 Training 10:00 AM - 12:00 PM
 Lunch * 12:00 - 12:30 PM
 Training 12:30 - 2:30 PM

Tuesday, September 16:

Training 10:00 AM - 12:00 PM
 Lunch* 12:00 - 12:30 PM
 Training 12:30 - 2:30 PM

* Lunch and seminar provided by the Severns Valley Association of Baptists

CALL 270-765-4023 TO RESERVE YOUR SPACE!

Mike Smith, Facilitator
LifeWay Christian Resources

LOCATION: Severns Valley Baptist Church
 Exit 94 off I-65 onto US-62, .8 mile. Turn right onto Ring Road, 5.9 miles - Arrive at 1100 Ring Road, Elizabethtown.

What is FAITH Evangelism?

FAITH evangelism is an intentional approach of disciple making, evangelism training and ministry.

FAITH evangelism is designed to be a journey that develops believers, connects people and multiplies disciples.

Equip your church to understand and implement FAITH Evangelism.

Study: Traditional views of sex on TV programs scarce

"Children and teens are now exposed to a host of sexual behaviors that less than a generation ago would have been considered off limits for broadcast television."

Tim Winters, president of Parents Television Council

Los Angeles (BP)—Broadcast television depicts sex in the context of marriage as either "nonexistent or burdensome" while portraying adultery and pre-marital sex as acceptable and desirable, according to a new study by the Parents Television Council.

"Today's primetime television programming is not merely indifferent to the institution of marriage and the stabilizing role it places in our society. It seems to be actively seeking to undermine marriage by consistently painting it in a negative light," the organization wrote in its Aug. 5 report.

Verbal references to non-marital sex "outnumbered references to marital sex by a ratio of nearly 3 to 1," the report noted, and scenes "depicting or implying sex between non-married partners" outnumbered similar scenes between married couples by nearly 4 to 1.

"Even more troubling than the marginalization of marriage and glorification of non-marital sex on television is TV's recent obsession with outré sexual expression," said Tim Winters, president of the PTC. "Children and teens are now exposed to a host of sexual behaviors that less than a generation ago would have been considered off limits for broadcast television."

"Throughout much of the history of broadcast television, the networks adhered to a voluntary code of conduct which stipulated that respect should be maintained for the sanctity of marriage and the value of the home," he added. "Our report finds

that not only are the boundaries no longer respected—they have been obliterated."

The watchdog group examined all scripted primetime entertainment programs which appeared on the major networks—ABC, CBS, Fox, NBC and the CW—during four weeks last September and October for a total of more than 200 programming hours. Among the findings:

■ The "family hour," the time slot between 8 p.m. and 9 p.m. Eastern set aside by the industry for the largest audience of children, contained the highest frequency of references to non-married sex. PTC found that "family hour" references to non-marital sex outnumbered references to sex in marriage by a ratio of 3.9 to 1. By comparison, during the following hour the references to non-marital versus marital sex averaged 2.5 to 1.

■ Parents who rely on the v-chip to block inappropriate content actually have a false sense of security, the study found. On ABC alone, 38 percent of programs aired during the "family hour" that contained sexual content did not receive the "S" descriptor (for sexual situations). During the 9 p.m. hour, 71 percent of programs containing sexual dialogue did not carry a proper descriptor.

■ Among all networks, ABC had the most references to marital sex, but "many of the references were negative," the study revealed. References to non-marital sex, though, were "almost universally positive or neutral."

Still singing the same song

Diversity in worship does not change the foundational truths of evangelism

By Michael Spencer, OBI campus minister

Hymnals are some of my favorite books. I have a semi-complete collection of Baptist hymnals going all the way back to the Civil War. It fascinates me to see how church music has changed and how tastes in songs of worship have changed over time. Some songs only appear once and disappear. Others last for decades and decades, even centuries.

Today I purchased a copy of the new 2008 Baptist Hymnal. It's a beautiful book, with more than 650 different songs. It is immediately noticeable that there are many more contemporary songs in this hymnal than in previous editions, but the good, well-worn standards still are there to be learned by new generations.

I am interested in hymns because we still sing them at OBI. We sing hymns Monday through Thursday in chapel, and reserve Friday for contemporary worship. We also sing hymns on Sunday morning, and contemporary music in the evening. While our students love contemporary worship as led by our worship leaders and bands, they also love the old hymns. From time to time, we have "hymn request day." Students fall over each other to get their favorite hymns selected. Once we were visited by a famous Kentucky journalist on a hymn request day and he was surprised that these young people from all over the world and so many different backgrounds enjoyed hymns so much.

I am glad that we keep the heritage of congregational hymn singing alive here at OBI. I appreciate our worship leaders and instrumentalists

who make hymn singing meaningful. I am sure the Wesleys, Fanny Crosby and Isaac Watts would all be surprised to see students from Eastern Kentucky, Africa, Asia and throughout America and the world singing those great songs.

Of course, Baptists in Kentucky have been "singing the same song" for many years, and that song is cooperation in missions and evangelism. Kentucky Baptists have a common appreciation for missions and a common commitment to

evangelism. Our unity is not in the details of doctrine, but in the essentials of the evangel and the foundation of the Great Commission.

At Oneida, we "sing the song" of the gospel through relationships, proclamation, serving others in Jesus' name and building community. Our staff seeks to meet the needs of students through listening, mentoring, sharing wisdom and providing unconditional love but we know that the greatest need of every

student is a relationship with Christ. In the work of evangelism, being connected to churches that believe in what we are doing is invaluable. These days, much fundraising amounts to hype and spin, but if a Kentucky Baptist comes to OBI, he or she will see evangelism on a daily basis, and see how evangelism can be part of every activity.

Singing the same song is increasingly difficult in these days of diverse worship preferences. But thankfully, our common passion and commitment to evangelism gives us Holy Spirit unity on what matters most.

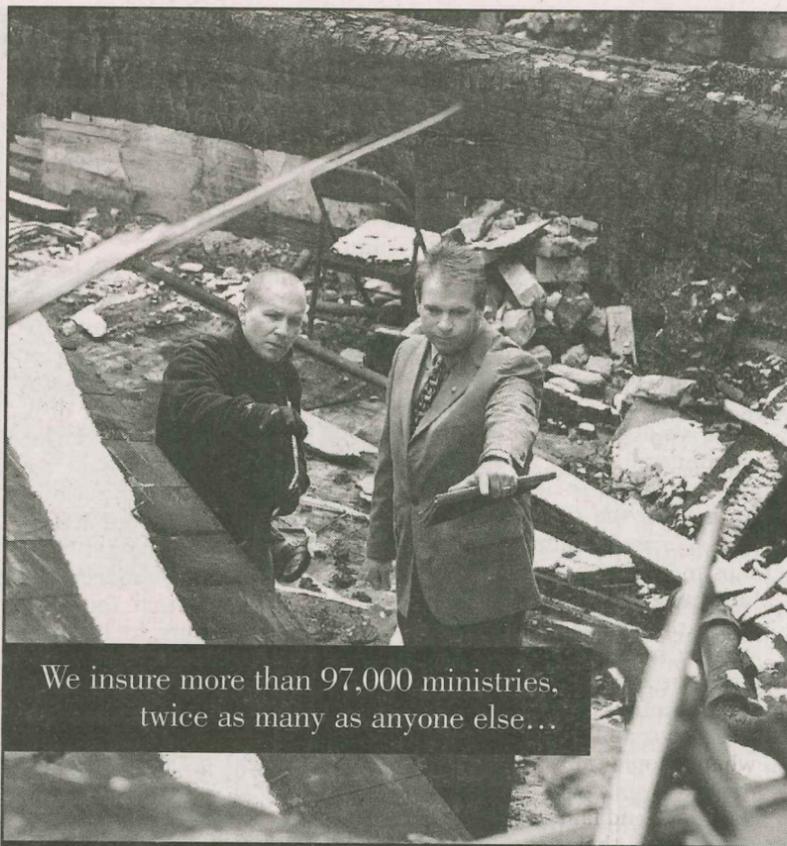
By prayer and giving, help us sing the great songs of God's grace here on God's mountain.

W.F. Underwood is president of Oneida Baptist Institute, Box 67, Oneida, KY 40972; www.oneidaschool.org; e-mail: president@oneidaschool.org

THIS IS ONEIDA



W.F. Underwood



We insure more than 97,000 ministries, twice as many as anyone else...

... one at a time.

Church Mutual conducts an on-site analysis of each church's insurance needs — so we know each facility is fully protected.

This, plus our size, financial strength and expertise are all good reasons to compare your present policy with a proposal from Church Mutual. Simply call 800.554.2642 or go to www.churchmutual.com.

Church Mutual
INSURANCE COMPANY

Listening | Learning | Leading®

churchmutual.com
800.554.2642

NOW SOUTHERN BAPTIST CHURCHES IN KENTUCKY CAN WORK DIRECTLY WITH CHURCH MUTUAL. CALL TO FIND OUT MORE.

Listening, Learning, Leading, is a registered trademark of Church Mutual Insurance Company.

© 2008 Church Mutual Insurance Company

Meet the Clear Creek family

As dean of students, Wade impacts daily campus life

One of the busiest departments on our campus is the area of Student Affairs. Dean of Students David Wade leads this important part of our campus life. Wade is a 1992 alumnus and has been serving at Clear Creek since 2000.

When you ask Dean Wade what he does at Clear Creek, it usually takes him a while to answer your question.

"The Student Affairs Department covers five different areas of the college," Wade said. "Our single-male and commuter residences, along with our food services department, operate out of Kelly Hall. This building is the centerpiece of the campus where something is always going on. It's always a busy place."

Most of our students are married with children. "The child development center serves children from the ages of two weeks to kindergarten. They do more than just babysit. It is actually a child development center where they also learn about the love of Christ. We also minister to a number of families in the community who use the center for day-care too."

Our campus family is blessed to

have medical facilities on campus. "We have a registered nurse who supervises the clinic," Wade noted. "She is a student spouse and just now has enrolled as a student herself. In the clinic we have three medical doctors and one dentist that volunteer their time to come and give medical treatment."

There also is time for recreational activities on campus. "My department also covers the campus Family Life and Conference Center," Wade said. "This is a wonderful facility where students and their families can congregate and have a wonderful time of fun, fellowship and exercise. We have a gymnasium, indoor swimming pool, weight room, ceramics room and game room. There is also a large conference room that can be used for meetings."

Dean Wade also oversees campus organizations such as Brotherhood and youth and children's groups. We are thankful for servants like him who are committed to a healthy and productive student life at Clear Creek.

Donnie Fox is president of Clear Creek Baptist Bible College, 300 Clear Creek Road, Pineville, KY 40977; toll-free: (866) 340-3196; Web site: www.ccbbc.edu; e-mail: dfox@ccbbc.edu

CLEAR CREEK
CHRONICLE



Donnie Fox

Social-networking Web sites redefining church outreach

By Rachel Mehlhaff
Associated Baptist Press

Waynesboro, Va. (ABP)—Social-networking sites like Facebook and MySpace are redefining the way many Americans build and maintain relationships—and also how their churches communicate.

In the last few years, relating to social contacts through such sites has become practically ubiquitous among the under-30 crowd, and the practice is quickly spreading upward along the demographic spectrum. Simultaneously, Christian leaders are realizing that the sites can be useful tools for youth ministry, college groups and other church groups, enabling members to reach each other consistently and instantaneously.

That's because social-networking sites are the new coffeehouses and community centers of the Internet. Facebook and MySpace are places where people can stay connected with what is going on in the lives of their friends and family.

People use their online profile pages to post pictures, send messages, create events and provide status updates to show what is going on in their lives. Facebook—currently the largest such site—has approximately 80 million active members.

Dale Tadlock, associate pastor at First Baptist Church of Waynesboro, Va., has been in student ministry for 20 years. He said he is staying linked with his students using Facebook.

"It has given me a great opportunity to work with students," he acknowledged. "It's become a way to stay informed."

While on the go, Tadlock uses the Internet feature of his "smart phone" mobile device to check Facebook to find out his students' latest status. Their profiles reveal current activities, pictures they have added and other Facebook users with whom they have had recent contact.

Tadlock said his colleagues nationwide are using such sites similarly in ministry, although some do so more extensively than others.

Tim Schmoyer, youth pastor at Evangelical Covenant Church in Alexandria, Minn., created a Facebook application—a customized add-on program that can be used on the site and added to users' pages—specifically for youth groups. The application sends news updates from a youth group's Web site to Facebook so the students know what is going on.

Every 30 minutes, the program checks to see if new information

has been added to the site by group members. If there is new info, the program updates a news feed that goes out to all members, who will see the news on their Facebook home pages the next time they log in. And young people log into social-networking sites with great frequency.

Schmoyer said Facebook works as an outreach tool as well, because online friends of the students see updates on what is going on at their friend's church. If an activity sounds interesting to them, they might decide to visit.

Like Tadlock, Schmoyer acknowledged Facebook is a valuable tool for keeping in touch with his students and what is going on in their lives.

"Kids put so much of their lives on there," he noted. "It is really telling what the kid is outside of church."

But are Christians relying too much on a commercial site not specifically geared toward their needs? After all—just like other major Internet communities—Facebook, MySpace and other social-networking sites have their unsavory precincts.

But, Tadlock noted, while similar sites specifically geared toward

Christians are popping up, he has not found them to be as useful. He said he believes it is more effective for Christians to reach out to the culture around them by taking the best of that culture and adapting it to holy uses.

However, one Christian site that is catching on through word of mouth is MyChurch.org, a social-networking site built around congregations. It currently has about 21,000 churches on it from across the United States and Canada, and about 150,000 individual members.

"It is kind of a MySpace for churches," said Joe Suh, one of the founders. The site was created about a year and half ago to fill a need at Suh's congregation, The River Church in San Jose, Calif.

MyChurch users can send individual or group messages, announce prayer requests, share photos and audio files, comment on sermons and organize and advertise events to others in the congregation.

People already were building networks for their churches on secular sites such as Facebook and MySpace. Suh said he does not have a problem with that, because it's good for Christians to be out in the secular world, pointing others toward Christ.

Facebook "has given me a great opportunity to work with students. It's become a way to stay informed."

Dale Tadlock, associate pastor at First Baptist Church of Waynesboro, Va.

Dads launch Christian, kid-friendly version of online community

By Chris Welch
Huntsville (Ala.) Times

Hartselle, Ala. (RNS)—More than a year ago, Randall Brown began looking for a safe place for kids to hang out. Online, that is.

He found out the hard way that MySpace is not just for finding friends, networking or listening to cool bands. Companies have hacked into MySpace and spam-slammed it with porn ads and advertisements.

He also looked at Facebook, and although that site has had better luck filtering out porn and advertisements, there still are teenagers being teenagers, posting comments, pictures, graphics and other applications that might be offensive.

So, Brown, 28, of Hartselle, Ala., and friend Michael Smith, 29, of Hatton, Ala., decided to come up with something different—Christian

SpaceOnline.com.

What makes it different? ChristianSpaceOnline automatically filters out bad language and warns offensive members of improper comments, pictures or graphics.

The two men wanted to find a safe space online not only for everyone from teenagers to adults, but also eventually for their kids.

"That's where the thought process came from," Brown acknowledged. "I was getting bombarded with solicitations from different things—pornography, dating sites, that kind of thing."

"You want it to be a safe place, but companies out there hire people to look for Web sites to solicit," he added. "We've had it on ours. Here's the good thing: If you reported things on MySpace, you never heard anything on it. If you report it on ours, it

comes to us and we can delete it and block the IP address."

The Web site went public last November. After a slow start, ChristianSpaceOnline soon had 996 members. At one point, after getting some exposure at concerts and other events, the site was getting 100 new members a day, quite a challenge considering both men work during the day and lead a weekly ministry.

Still, the pair said they think it is worth all the hard work.

"You can go on and look at our blogs," Brown said. "We had one girl who said, 'I just accepted Christ and things go on in life that make me question my decision. Because I'm a believer of Christ, why do bad things happen?'"

"I sent her an e-mail that said, 'Just because bad things happen doesn't mean God isn't on your side,'" he recalled. "We have pastors who reach out to us and are 100 percent behind it. If there's a situation where they need to be involved, they will help."

Of course, there always will be those who push the boundaries of

even a Christian site.

"Yeah, we have people who test our language filters," Brown noted. "If you put a curse word on the comments—unless they manipulate the word—we can block it. The good thing about our site is that when it's reported, we're right on the spot and can go in and delete the comment. We can do the same thing with pictures."

Brown said if a guy puts up a picture of himself at the beach with no shirt, it gets pulled. If a girl puts up one showing her in a bathing suit, it too gets pulled.

He recalled a mother who was concerned when her 13-year-old son was contacted by a 19-year-old man from Tennessee. The mother could not cite anything offensive, but was uncomfortable. So, Brown contacted the man and suggested he talk to people more his age.

"We're never going to be 100 percent perfect, but it's better than the alternatives," Brown said. "There's no guaranteed safety at church or school. We try to keep it as clean as possible."

IN RECOGNITION of Deceased Kentucky Baptist Leaders

The 2008 KBC Obituaries Report will include information on deceased persons who have served our Lord and Kentucky Baptists in a noteworthy manner. We are including persons who died during the convention year, September 1, 2007 through August 31, 2008.

These persons would be Kentucky Baptist ministers, missionaries, educators, laypersons, institutional leaders and staff and others whose Christian service has significantly benefited our state convention fellowship and mission programs.



We Need Your Help To
Gather the Following Information:

- Full name of deceased
- Date of birth
- Date of death
- Active or retired status in last position held in city, state where located
- Name of church where member, association, state where located
- Service or ministry worthy of recognition (briefly stated)

Please forward this information
before August 29 to:



Executive Office
PO Box 43433, Louisville KY 40253-0433
ATTN: Wanda Karolyi
e-mail address:
Wanda.Karolyi@kybaptist.org

Is Your Van Safe? Send for a Free CD!

Carpenter Bus Sales, the exclusive Bus
Provider for LifeWay Church Bus Sales, not only
sells buses...we keep up with safety issues,
legislation, regulations and insurance
considerations... so you can make an informed
purchase!

2007
Clearance Sale!
Save up to \$14,000
on a New 2007
model bus.



If you have questions about van safety
or your liabilities involved in transporting
passengers in a van, let us
send you a FREE CD entitled *Is Your
Van Safe?*
Request online: carpenterbus.com/safety
Email: info@carpenterbus.com

America's #1 Church Bus Dealer • 1.800.370.6180 • carpenterbus.com

"We're never going to be 100 percent perfect, but it's better than the alternatives. There's no guaranteed safety at church or school. We try to keep it as clean as possible."

Randall Brown,
co-creator of
ChristianSpace
Online.com

PRAYER PARTNERS

Please pray for the following Kentucky Baptist missionaries and ministries:

Jail and prison ministry of Westside Baptist Church in Murray. This ministry to inmates and their families provides aftercare to former prisoners who seek to follow Jesus Christ in a changed lifestyle. The ministry also provides preventative care for at-risk children and youth. Pray that inmates will find and follow Christ through Bible studies and worship. Pray for the New Beginnings support group as it ministers to those being released from incarceration.

MSC literacy missionary Rebecca Carnell of Vine Grove. Carnell serves as literacy consultant for the Kentucky Baptist Convention, equipping and encouraging volunteers who teach literacy and share Christ through English as a Second Language, tutoring children and youth, and adult reading and writing programs. Literacy ministry is an effective tool for evangelism, discipleship and church planting. Pray for more volunteers with a passion for teaching and sharing Christ. Pray that churches will share a greater vision by using their classrooms for literacy ministry.

If you would like Kentucky Baptists to join in praying for a ministry of your church or association, please send the information to Eric Allen at Eric.Allen@kybaptist.org or call (866) 489-3530.

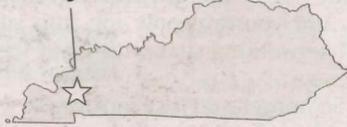
MOUNTAINS TO THE MISSISSIPPI

COMPILED BY STAFF

- **BUFFALO**—Mount Tabor Church recently called **Barry Fields** as pastor.
- **HARDIN**—Aurora Church will hold homecoming services Aug. 17, 11 a.m., to celebrate its 5th anniversary with a note-burning ceremony. **Richard Edmiston** is pastor.
- **KIMPER**—Kimper Mission recently ordained Pastor **Andy Keaton** to the gospel ministry.
- **KUTTAWA**—Hopewell Church recently called **Mike Farmer** as pastor.
- **LOUISVILLE**—Carlisle Avenue Church recently called **Terry Delaney** as children's minister. **Jason Allen** is pastor.
- **MOUNT VERNON**—First Church will host its first annual Gospel Music Fest Aug. 17, 6 p.m., featuring several gospel music groups. For more information, call (606) 256-2922. **Eddie Nation** is pastor.
- **PRINCETON**—Second Church recently called **Wayne Duncan** as pastor.

Spotlight on ...

Eddyville



New Bethel Church will honor **Jerrell White** for 50 years in ministry Aug. 17, 12:30 p.m., with a potluck meal and special music. For more information, call Pastor **John Baker** at (270) 625-9243.

Dale Ford recently retired as pastor of Sugar Creek Church.

■ **SCIENCE HILL**—Northside Church will host **Southern Harmony** in concert Aug. 17, 6 p.m. For more information, call (606) 423-2271. **David Muse** is pastor.

Campbellsville Univ. hosts Brazilian educators for U.S. college workshop

Campbellsville—Campbellsville University hosted 16 higher education administrators from various private universities in Brazil for a July 20-28 workshop to learn how Campbellsville and other public and private universities in the United States operate.

The university officials, which included presidents, vice presidents and directors, represented Brazilian institutions ranging in size from 650 to 5,300 students.

Several Campbellsville administrators addressed the Brazilian contingent on a variety of topics related to directing a private university. Subjects ranged from leadership styles to recruiting students.

Campbellsville University Presi-

dent Michael Carter told the group he welcomed the opportunity to exchange ideas, adding that Campbellsville "looks forward to great things happening in the future" with its Brazilian counterparts.

Tony Cunha, associate dean of Campbellsville's School of Music, interpreted for the educators, the majority of whom did not speak English. He said a primary reason the educators wanted to visit the university was to learn how small institutions survive with larger universities nearby.

During their visit to Kentucky, the Brazilian group also visited University of Kentucky, University of Louisville and Transylvania University in Lexington.



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

August

- 16 Super Saturday, Immanuel Baptist Church, Lexington.
- 21 Understanding Other Beliefs, First Baptist Church, Pikeville.
- 23 Super Saturday, St. Matthews Baptist Church, Louisville.
- 30-9/1 Wrangler Trail Ride, Land Between the Lakes.

September

- 6 Super Saturday, First Baptist Church, Somerset, and Lone Oak First Baptist Church, Paducah.
- 11 Retired Director of Missions/Spouse Luncheon, Severns Valley Associational Office, Elizabethtown.
- 12-13 Women on Mission Fall Retreat, Jonathan Creek.

- 13 Punt, Pass & Kick, Campbellsville University.
- 13 Super Saturday, First Baptist Church, Pikeville, and First Baptist Church, Bowling Green.
- 15 Preparing for Retirement, Buena Vista Baptist Church, Owensboro.
- 16 Preparing for Retirement, Baptist Building, Louisville.
- 17 Preparing for Retirement, First Baptist Church, Somerset.
- 18 Preparing for Retirement, Unity Baptist Church, Ashland.
- 19-21 FOCUS 2008, Jonathan Creek.
- 22-23 Kentucky Baptist Ministers' Golf Tournament, Cherry Blossom Golf & Country Club, Georgetown.

For more information, call (800) 266-6477 or visit www.kybaptist.org



TIME TO LEARN A group of 16 administrators from private universities in Brazil gathered with senior staff from Campbellsville University July 20-28 for a workshop to learn how private higher education institutions in the United States operate. (Photo courtesy of Campbellsville University)

CLASSIFIED ADS

FOR SALE: Covermaster gym floor protective covering system. \$1,200 or best offer. Westport Road Baptist, (502) 425-2350.

FOR SALE: Allen Church Organ (ADC3160A). Two-manual, draw-knob, full pedals, midi, 4 external speakers. Excellent condition. Best Offer. (270) 351-3524.

FOR SALE: New and used church buses/vans. Call American Bus and Accessories, Inc., at (800) 582-7118.

FREE: Two sections of lockers—18-box type in each section. Westport Road Baptist Church, (502) 425-2350.

SEEKING: Bivocational pastor for Bethany Missionary Church in rural Lyon County. For more information, please call (270) 522-7670, or send resumé to Bethany Baptist Church, PO Box 1130, Eddyville, KY 42038.

SEEKING: Financial analyst at Southern Seminary. Part-time position to research, analyze, forecast and report on various financial data. Qualifications include bachelors degree in accounting or finance, excellent math and spreadsheet skills, and two or more years of related experience. Please forward resumé in confidence to humanresources@sbts.edu; or Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2825 Lexington Road, Louisville, KY 40280, Attn: Human Resources.

SEEKING: Part-time music/worship leader to join the ministry team at Bagdad Baptist Church. Responsibilities include leading the overall music ministry of the church. Interested applicants should send a cover letter and resumé to Kyle Wiley 5790 Elm-burg Road Bagdad, KY 40003; or to bagdadbaptist@bellsouth.net. Resumés accepted through Aug. 29, 2008.

SEEKING: Part-time director of music for First Baptist Church, Danville, Ky. This position is responsible for planning, conducting and overseeing a comprehensive program of music for the church. A bachelor's degree is required with 3-5 years experience preferred. First Baptist Church, Danville, has a new facility located in beautiful central Kentucky. We are seeking a God-called individual who loves music ministry, is a self-starter, mature in spirit, a team player and able to plan and lead. Please send resumé to Music Search Committee, First Baptist Church, 1570 North Danville Bypass, Danville, KY 40422; or e-mail to colleen@fbcdanville.org.

SEEKING: Full-time pastor for Reid Village Baptist (averaging 75). Located just outside Mt. Sterling, Reid Village is a missions-minded, giving and loving church. Please send resumé to PO Box 157, Mt. Sterling, KY 40353.

SEEKING: Part-time youth minister for Clarkson (Ky.) Baptist Church. If interested, please visit our Web site at www.clarksonbaptist.org for details and contact information.

SEEKING: Part-time secretary (20-25 hours a week) for Lakeside Baptist in Jeffersontown (Louisville area). Computer skills a must. Duties include bulletins, newsletters, Web site updates and other office duties. Send resumé along with references to: Personnel Committee, Lakeside Baptist Church, 11412 Taylorsville Road, Louisville, KY 40299; or e-mail to brian@lakesidebaptist.us.

SEEKING: Full-time minister of worship and outreach for a growing church in western Kentucky. We are currently constructing a new worship facility and have two morning services (one traditional and one contemporary) with a combined Sunday morning attendance of 400-plus. Experience preferred; salary negotiable. Send resumé to: Edgewood Baptist Church, 676 North Drive, Hopkinsville, KY 42240; or e-mail to edbc@bellsouth.net. For more information, please call (270) 886-4461.

SEEKING: Part-time minister of music. Responsible for planning and directing church music. Send resumé to Gamaliel Baptist Church, PO Box 148, Gamaliel, KY 42140; or carder@scrtc.com.

SEEKING: Minister of music for a medium-sized Southern Baptist church. Comprehensive music/worship leadership, including praise teams and choirs. Blended style of worship. Send resumé to PO Box 825, Versailles, KY 40383.

SEEKING: Full-time pastor for Oak Hill Baptist Church, Sonora, Ky. Please send resumé to Arleight Durham, 3153 Oak Hill Road, Sonora, KY 42776; or e-mail to ardurham@scrtc.com.

SEEKING: Full-time pastor for First Baptist Church, Mayfield, Ky. Degree from a Southern Baptist seminary. Please send resumé and non-returnable video or DVD to Pastor Search Committee, First Baptist Church Mayfield, 118 West South St., Mayfield, KY 42066.

SEEKING: Full-time minister to preschoolers to plan and coordinate a comprehensive ministry to preschool children and their families at First Baptist Church, Clarksville, Tenn. Send resumé to Ron Moore, 435 Madison St., Clarksville, TN 37040.

SEEKING: Full-time general secretary competent in MS Word, Excel, Publisher, and administrative module of Church Windows. Salary and benefits; 35 hours, five days a week. Broadway Baptist Church, (502) 895-2459. Phyllis@broadwaybaptist.org.

In the garden

Families share experiences of gardening as a way to teach important life lessons

By Grace Thornton
The Alabama Baptist

Saraland, Ala. (BP)—Lots of people cry around onions, but for Steve Tierce, it's okra that gets him a little choked up. As well as squash, tomatoes and eggplant.

"It's all special to me because of my dad," Tierce said, wiping away a few tears. "I helped him when I was a kid. Then he helped me with my farm, and now I help him with his again. He taught me everything I know about gardening."

His father, Russell Tierce—a retired Baptist pastor—taught him a lot about the Lord through gardening as well.

"He would plant vegetables in the garden and then he would pray, 'Lord, I've done my part. Please give us the increase now,'" recalled Tierce, pastor of rural Pilgrim Rest Baptist Church near Spring Garden, Ala. "He taught us to appreciate the increase as being from the Lord."

Tierce remembered how that "increase" panned out, when he would sit with his father on warm nights snapping and shelling peas and then eat the delicious result.

"Dad taught us to always be thankful for what we have," Tierce said. "And we were."

It's a lesson not lost on Tierce's children and grandchildren. As his house sits just behind his father's, Tierce's daughter's family lives just behind him and thrives on peas and okra just as he did and still does.

In addition to sharing the veggies, Tierce is taking advantage of the opportunity to pass the lessons on.

"One evening ... my 4-year-old granddaughter helped me put the fertilizer around the okra and my 7-year-old grandson helped me hoe it," Tierce noted. "We enjoy it. We have a lot of fun with it, and I get to teach them something, too."

Roy Horn knows the feeling.

Horn said he believes a day well spent is one spent working with the land, watching squash, zucchini, tomatoes, potatoes and green beans come up in spades.

And to him, a life well spent is teaching his children the rich taste of homegrown food, the prudence of putting up vegetables for the days to come and the pleasure of giving away the extra.

He always has been that way, according to daughter Judy Kinard. "I can't remember a time he didn't garden. He grew up in the Great Depression and he didn't have a lot. He lived off the land—if you didn't grow it, you didn't eat."

Throughout her whole life, her dad has passed on to her the value of a hard day's work, not to mention the importance of sharing with the neighbors, said Kinard, a member of Bayou Sara Baptist Church in Saraland, Ala., which Horn also attends.

She remembered keeping up her part of an assembly line each June, shucking and cutting corn off the cob.



"We didn't mind the work. We learned really quickly from him that we would appreciate it when winter-time came," Kinard recalled. "And we learned to appreciate fresh food. Nothing tastes sweeter than something that comes from a garden."

Nothing sweeter, that is, unless it is a father's love. But then again, Horn has demonstrated that through the garden, too, she acknowledged.

Mature Living magazine carries a regular column on gardening, often describing how it can build strong bonds with children while having fun outside rather than at the computer or in front of the television.

"Use this time to encourage a healthy respect for the beautiful world that God created," one article suggested, noting that gardening also offers the opportunity to teach

life lessons, such as patience, the rewards of labor and commitment.

Joe Staggs, a member of First Baptist Church of Cloverdale, in Florence, Ala., can attest to the truth of that idea.

"My wife and I have four sons and a daughter. I gardened with the children from the time they were little," Staggs recalled. His daughter loved it so much that she and her family stayed on the farm, helping gather and freeze vegetables each year until she died in a car accident.

"Her daughter Kadi lives with us now ... and she has never forgotten her (mother's) love for us or for gardening," Staggs said.

"I feel the life on the farm and in the garden and our influence, as well as her mother's, has made her the Christian girl she is today," Staggs noted.

ALL IN THE FAMILY
Steve Tierce (right), pastor of Pilgrim Rest Baptist Church near Spring Garden, Ala., takes a break from working in the garden with (from left) his father, Russell Tierce; his 4-year-old granddaughter, Rachel Ballew; and 7-year-old grandson Tyler Ballew. (BP photo by Steve Gross)

Texas pastor advocates blessings of caring for foster children

By Bonnie Pritchett
Southern Baptist Texan

Garland, Texas (BP)—Russell Rogers is a pastor with a passion for encouraging church families to adopt or provide foster care for displaced children.

Rogers' congregation, Trinity Life Baptist Church in Garland, Texas, hosts an annual celebration of foster and adoptive families, and Rogers serves as a spokesman for a faith-based program called CHILD—Congregations Helping in Love and Dedication.

Even before they were married, Rogers and his wife, Shelly, had planned to adopt children. After marriage, news that they could not have children of their own prompted the couple to seek licensing by the state in 1996 as foster parents. Over the course of 11 years, they fostered nearly 20 children and adopted three. Also during that time, the couple was blessed with two biological children.

"We got to the point where our quiver was full," Rogers recalled, adding that although there was no more physical room for additional children in their home, there was plenty of room in their hearts.

"The burden didn't go away," he emphasized.

That was when Rogers and the families of Trinity Life Baptist were celebrating adoptive and foster families. After all, Rogers said, it was



CHILD ADVOCATE Texas pastor Russell Rogers speaks to a church group about the benefits of foster care and adoption. Rogers serves as a spokesman for a Texas faith-based program called CHILD (Congregations Helping in Love and Dedication). (BP photo)

a family from his own church who introduced him to the idea of foster care and adoption from the state. Before then, he and his wife had inquired about adoption through private agencies. The \$26,000 price tag—on a pastor's salary—put adoption out of reach. That was until they began speaking with a couple at their church who arrived one Sunday with a baby placed in their care by the state of Texas.

Rogers said he now hopes he can be "that person from church" who introduces others to the idea of state foster care and adoption.

Some people have a calling to this ministry but do not know where or

how to begin the process, Rogers noted. Last year, more than 35 families indicated an interest in becoming foster families.

Felicia Mason-Edwards, a program specialist for CHILD, said religious families serve as the majority of foster families in Texas and the state draws heavily from churches to meet the needs of displaced children.

While not everyone can be a foster parent, everyone can do something, Mason-Edwards explained. As a body, congregations can act to support adoptive and foster-care parents in a variety of ways.

She applauded the efforts of

churches to minister to people in foreign lands but added, "Those children are in your community. Here, in Texas, you have your own mission field."

Rogers said the church should be the first to take on the ministry of foster care and adoption. According to the Texas Child Protective Services overview for last year, there were 71,344 confirmed cases of child abuse and/or neglect and 33,615 children under 17 years old were placed in foster care. About one-third of those eventually were reunited with their families, but the others remained in state supervision.

Because the children have been removed from their homes due to neglect and/or abuse, they need the love and care that a Christian home can offer, Rogers said.

"Imagine how awesome it would be if the church would rise up and Christian homes could be a place of healing," he noted. "There are kids who will go to bed tonight in Texas thinking no one wants them."

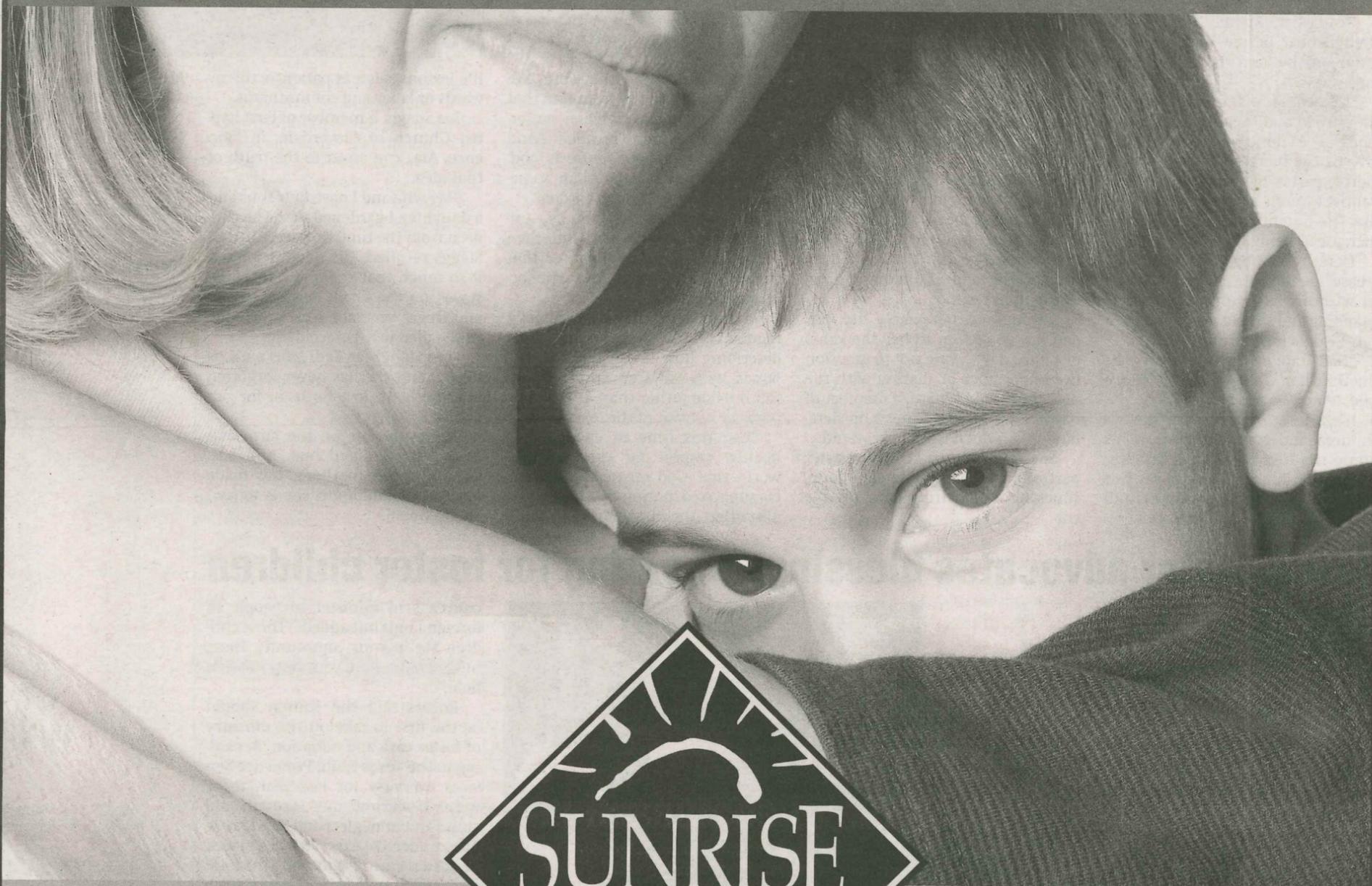
True religion, Rogers pointed out, is defined in James 1:27: "Pure and undefiled religion before our God and Father is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself unstained by the world."

"I believe God calls and equips specific people, in strategic places, for significant purposes," Rogers said.

SUNRISE CHILDREN'S SERVICES

*Comprehensive faith-based care for
children and families in crisis*

*Therapeutic Foster Care • Residential Treatment Facilities
Crisis Stabilization • Adoption Services
Christian Counseling Centers • Youth Support Center
IMPACT Plus Service Coordination*



**You CAN make a
difference in the
life of a child!**



**Find out how
YOU can
help!**

SUNRISE CHILDREN'S SERVICES
(800) 456-1386

For more information about our services or to make a secure credit card donation, visit

www.Sunrise.org